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Total, ELF invite Iraqis for talks

NICOSIA (AP) — French oil companies have invited an Iraqi delegation to Paris for talks. In the first such request by a Western country since the end of the Gulf war, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported Monday. The Cyprus-based industry weekly said Iraq had accepted the invitation and would send Taha Hamud, a senior under-secretary at the Ministry of Oil, at the head of a delegation. It said a date for the visit had not been finalized, but that it was expected to take place at the end of February or in early March. The newsletter said the French companies, Total and ELF Aquitaine, had held many meetings in Baghdad since the summer of 1991 concerning the development of the giant Nahr Utha and Magnoon oil fields. It underscored that no agreement could be signed as long as the United Nations sanctions, banning Iraq's exports and trade with Baghdad, remained in force. The newsletter noted that France and the United States differed on conditions that would allow the sanctions to be lifted.

Qadhafi congratulates King Hussein

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday evening received a telephone call from Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi who congratulated him on the signing of the Yemeni reform and reconciliation agreement in Amman Sunday. Colonel Qadhafi voiced appreciation of the King's role and efforts exerted to bring the Yemeni feuding parties to sign the agreement.

Kuwait says it seeks fugitives

KUWAIT (AP) — Diplomatic missions have been ordered not to renew the passports of three Kuwaiti men, including two royal princes, implicated in a multi-billion-dollar investment scandal, the newspaper Al Qabas reported Monday. The independent daily said missions abroad have been instructed to inform the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry if they hear from any of the three men. Al Qabas provided no attribution for the report. Fuad Jaffar, Sheikh Khaled Nasser Al Sabah and Sheikh Fahad Mohammad Al Sabah, all former officials of the London-based Kuwait Investment Office, vanished after their indictment last year. They have been charged with embezzling public money leading to the collapse of a \$4 billion investment empire in Spain. Kuwait has sought the help of the Interpol to arrest them.

Yemeni captors free three Chinese

SANAA (AP) — Three Chinese road-building experts kidnapped more than a week ago by Yemeni tribesmen were released Monday, diplomatic sources said. The sources spoke on condition they not be named, said the three men were unharmed but declined to immediately give more detail. The abduction was the latest in a long series of hostage-taking of foreign workers in Yemen by tribes who want to pressure the authorities to address their grievances. The tribe who took the three Chinese men in broad daylight from the Mareb-Khawlun highway on Feb. 12 were said to be demanding construction of a road through their area.

Frenchman murdered in Algiers

PARIS (R) — Unknown assailants killed a French shopkeeper in central Algiers on Monday, the Algerian state news agency APS said. APS, monitored in Paris, said Joaquin Grau, 52, was attacked in his bookshop by "terrorists" — the term used by Algerian authorities for Muslim fundamentalists — and died in hospital. French radio said Grau was shot several times. His death took to 29 the number of foreigners killed in Algeria's political violence since last September, six of them French (see page 2).

Kuwait: No problem for agency in Tunis

TUNIS (R) — The Tunis office of Kuwait's news agency KUNA is functioning normally after the resolution of its problems with authorities, the Kuwait embassy said on Monday. "KUNA's office is operating normally. There was a misunderstanding which we have amicably resolved with the help of Tunisian authorities," Walid Al Khubeizy, Kuwait's charge d'affaires in Tunis, told Reuters. "Reports about a closure of KUNA's office were exaggerated," he added. KUNA Paris bureau chief said last Friday Tunisia had ordered the KUNA correspondent in Tunis to stop working and cut off his telephone, apparently because he quoted a Muslim fundamentalist leader. Authorities had not officially asked the office to shut. Tunisia last week ordered the expulsion of the British Broadcasting Corporation's correspondent, accusing him of giving too much publicity to the views of Muslim militants.

Jordan Times

Amman Jordan Times Foundation
عن المؤسسة الصحفية
الرائدة

Clinton says Serbs heeded NATO call, but warns anew

Europeans want to end sieges throughout Bosnia

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. President Bill Clinton said Monday that Bosnian Serbs were in "effective compliance" with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) demand to withdraw their heavy weapons from around Sarajevo but said any violation would bring a "certain and swift" response from the west. Mr. Clinton also promised the United States will help in efforts to forge a "lasting and workable peace" in Bosnia but warned that "any shelling of Sarajevo... will bring a certain and swift response."

Speaking to reporters in a hastily arranged news conference at the White House briefing room, Mr. Clinton tried to capitalize on his first limited foreign policy success in the troubled region. He commended U.S. troops, NATO allies, the U.N. and Russia, which urged the Serbs to heed the ultimatum. Mr. Clinton made the remarks after meeting with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Defence Secretary William Perry and National Security Adviser Tony Lake. In other Bosnia-related developments: — U.N. peacekeepers were taking control of the last Serb guns around Sarajevo as a growing chorus of voices called for NATO's air strike ultimatum aimed at ending shelling of the besieged Bosnian capital to be used in the rest of Bosnia.

— European governments, capitalising on their first success in the Bosnia conflict after two years of impotence, sought to extend NATO's ultimatum to relieve sieges elsewhere in Bosnia and advance peace talks. "We may have the beginning of the end of this nightmare," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told reporters during talks in Paris with French leaders. Italian Defence Minister Fabio Fubini told Reuters: "The success of the firm line has taught us not to abandon this fundamental choice. The Sarajevo formula, which was also helped by Russia's contribution, must be extended to all of Bosnia."

— France urged the international community to seize the opportunity created by the NATO ultimatum to press for a wider peace in Bosnia. President Francois Mitterrand was expected to call for a new U.N. Security Council debate. — General Sir Michael Rose, commander of U.N. forces in Bosnia, said there was new hope in the eyes of the republic's war-weary people after the Serb gunners pulled back. A U.N. officer said Gen. Rose wanted to use the same strategy elsewhere to consolidate the peace. — The commander of U.N. troops in former Yugoslavia, General Jean Cot, said he wanted to use the demilitarisation in Sarajevo as a model and extend it to other Bosnia trouble spots. — Turkey approved of the delay in air strikes in Bosnia but said NATO should show the same resolve to break Serbian sieges in other Muslim regions. — Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said more than half of his army's heavy weapons had been withdrawn from Sarajevo while the rest were under United Nations control. — U.S. Admiral Mike Bourda, commander of NATO forces in southern Europe, said he could still mount strikes if the shelling of Sarajevo resumed or the Serbs tried to

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PLO, Israel resume self-rule negotiations

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) started more talks in Cairo on Monday to complete a detailed agreement on Palestinian self-rule which they have been working on since last October. Palestinian sources said a deal on the transfer of civilian authority from Israel to the PLO in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho was at hand and could be sealed soon. On Security arrangements — a more thorny issue — both sides were due to draw up final drafts on all the details that would follow Israeli withdrawal from the two self-rule areas. Chief PLO negotiator Nabil Shaath said on Monday the talks in Cairo should bring agreement on how big a Palestinian police force should be and what weapons it should have. PLO sources said Israel was talking about a 6,000-strong air, sea and land force while the Palestinians demand 10,000. Israel insists Palestinian police must not carry mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars or Katyusha rockets and that their weapons must be confined to Kalashnikovs, pistols and batons at the first stage.

The negotiators were also expected to set a timetable for the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, dismantling its military installations and the deployment of the Palestinian police in the future autonomous area. Israel and the PLO missed the deadline for Israel to start pulling out of the Gaza Strip and Jericho more than two months ago. The Palestinians now say they hope to have a deal by the end of Ramadan. Dr. Shaath said the negotiators also had to go into further details on security zones around the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip, where Israeli forces will retain some powers. A separate group, led by Jamil Al Tarifi for the PLO and Gadi Zohar for Israel, is talking about the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinians, especially the allocation of radio and television frequencies and archaeological matters. Dr. Shaath's counterpart on the Israeli side is Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahak. Another set of negotiators

Army clash mars Yemen agreement

SANAA (Agencies) — Five people reportedly were killed in a clash Monday between northern and southern Yemeni forces, threatening to undermine a day-old reconciliation accord between their two leaders. It was the first fatal clash between the northern and southern armies since a leadership crisis broke out six months ago that paralysed government and contributed to a deterioration of law and order. Oil industry sources in Sanaa said the clash occurred in Abyan, 320 kilometres south of the Yemeni capital. Hours after the reports surfaced, it was unclear if the fighting was continuing. The cabinet, meeting in emergency session, assigned the minister of defence and the army chief of staff to take urgent measures to stop the clash "and swiftly investigate and punish those who triggered it."

In a separate statement, the Defence Ministry said the clashes "almost killed the joy of the Yemeni nation" following the signing of the reconciliation pact. Insisting on anonymity, the oil sources said about 150 northern troops of the Amalqa Brigade besieged government offices in Abyan after reports the governor of the province, a northerner, had been replaced by a southerner. They said South Yemeni troops, backed by tanks, clashed with this group, leaving five dead. They did not know to which side the casualties belonged. A later statement issued in Aden by Defence Minister Haithem Oassem, a southerner, said the clashes occurred when troops of the Amalqa Brigade "provocatively deployed" and cut off troops of the southern Madra Brigade who were trying to return to barracks. The statement expressed regret for "the spilling of innocent blood." It did not elaborate or give the number of casualties. In Amman, officials said that despite the signing of the reconciliation and reform charter on Sunday, Yemen's two leaders were still deeply divided. Among the reforms listed in the reconciliation charter is a requirement for all army units

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His Majesty King Hussein on Monday sees off Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh (Petra)

Yemeni leaders leave for home paying tribute to Jordan's role

AMMAN (J.T.) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh and other Yemeni leaders Monday left for home after signing a reform and reconciliation agreement in Amman Sunday. Mr. Saleh was seen off at the airport by His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Upper House Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, Lower House Speaker Taher Al Masri, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker, the King's political advisor Marwan Al Qassem, the King's advisor Khalid Al Karaki, and other senior officials. Mr. Saleh was accompanied by Yemeni Presidential Council member Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, head of the Yemeni Al Islah Islamic Party Abdullah Al Ahmar and officials. In a pre-departure statement, President Saleh commended efforts exerted by Jordan and other Arab and foreign countries to end the Yemeni dispute and which culminated in the signing of the reconciliation and reform agreement. The agreement ends a six-month political crisis and brings about reforms to steer

the course of 44-month old united Yemen. While in Jordan, Mr. Saleh said, the Yemeni officials held talks with Jordanian officials on bilateral relations and issues of concern to Jordan and Yemen. "We had consultations on bilateral issues of concern to Yemen and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as well as issues of concern to our Arab and Islamic nations," he said. "If at the present we have overcome the challenges of the Yemeni crisis, we have ahead of us as Arabs greater challenges that we have to withstand seriously and sincerely." He said the only way for Arabs and Muslims to succeed in overcoming problems facing them is to end rifts among them and give priority to higher national interests. All these issues, he said, were on focus in the Jordanian-Yemeni talks and added that he was looking forward to discuss these issues with other Arab countries. The Yemeni president reiterated his thanks for King Hussein and the Jordanian government for their efforts to close the gaps between Yemeni leaders and for the hospitality they were accorded in Amman.

Vice-President Beidh was seen off at the airport by Prime Minister and senior officials. Following his departure, Mr. Beidh sent a cable to King Hussein thanking him for the hospitality accorded to him and to the Yemeni leadership, and voicing appreciation for the King's efforts to end the political crisis in Yemen. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan described the signing of the reconciliation and reform agreement in Amman as a historic event. Mr. Hassan said the agreement was a cause of joy for the Jordanian leadership and people and for the Arab Nation as a whole. He said the event affirms that Amman will always remain in the lead of Arab countries calling for unifying Arab ranks and mending fences. The meeting, he said, reflects the confidence King Hussein enjoys in Yemen. Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yousef Ben Alawi said Monday that his country considers the signing of the Yemeni agreement as a blessed step and expressed hope that the Yemenis will

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Rabin and Gonzalez discuss peace talks

MADRID (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and his Spanish counterpart Felipe Gonzalez on Monday discussed aspects of the proposed Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho, officials said. Mr. Rabin, who arrived in Madrid for a two-day visit, met Mr. Gonzalez for nearly two hours which were devoted entirely to the Middle East peace process. The Israeli leader outlined the problems involved in setting up a civilian administration in the occupied territories. These include managing water, gas and electricity supplies, building a banking system and setting up a police force. Spain, which hosted the historic 1991 peace conference, has offered to help train a new force and to supply vehicles and communications equipment. Talks between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel are being held in Cairo where Palestinian sources said a deal on the transfer of civilian authority from Israel to the PLO in the Gaza Strip and Jericho was at hand and could be sealed soon. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Rabin were due to dine together on Monday night and to meet again on Tuesday for talks followed by a joint press conference. They are expected to discuss bilateral commercial relations and Israel's links with the European Union (EU).

West Bank settlers block main roads

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Dozens of settlers blocked main roads with burning tyres and rocks in the occupied West Bank on Monday to prevent Palestinians from reaching their workplaces in Israel, correspondents reported. Protestors waving Israeli flags demonstrated for two hours at crossroads, halting traffic from daybreak. The settlers shouted slogans demanding that Israel hold on to the occupied territories. "If Israel cannot move about safely we will not let Arab cars use the roads," settlers' spokesman Shai Bazak said. Troops did not intervene and the demonstrators dispersed peacefully. The protests followed the killing of an Israeli woman near the West Bank settlement of Ariel on Friday night. And a Palestinian stabbed a Jewish carpenter in the abdomen on Sunday, lightly wounding the 39-year-old near Ramle in central Israel. The killing of the woman outraged Israelis and led Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to call a meeting of his defence cabinet on Sunday to review security. Izzeddin Al Qassam, the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, claimed responsibility for the attack and military officials said the army was hunting Hamas activists. Police Minister Moshe Shahal announced Sunday that para-military civil guard posts would open soon in the main settlements. Foreign Minister Shimon

Peres said reinforcements would be deployed in the occupied territories, but he ruled out a tightening of restrictions imposed since last March to prevent Palestinians from entering Israel. Israeli troops shot and wounded five Palestinians during clashes on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank on Sunday. Hamas' warning Hamas warned Arab Citizens of Israel Monday to keep out of Israel's army of occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A leaflet from the group's psychological warfare department said Israel was replacing units of Jewish soldiers in Gaza with Druze and bedouin from inside Israel. "The Israeli government in a racist way has been cutting back the number of soldiers of Jewish origin and strengthening the presence of Druze and bedouin to cut the number of Jewish deaths," it added. "We shall strike everyone riding in an Israeli patrol and we will not distinguish between the Jew or the Druze or the bedouin... we advise the Druze and bedouin to leave the army which has killed the sons of your people." The group said Palestinian "collaborators" were being pressed to serve in the Israeli army. The military had no immediate comment. Hamas resumed killing suspected "collaborators" last month after a two-month amnesty. It killed an Israeli agent in a well-organised ambush last week.

Iraq seeks return of its planes from Iran

NICOSIA (R) — An Iranian newspaper said on Monday that Iraq sought to persuade Iran in Tehran talks last week to return planes flown there secretly before and during the 1991 Gulf war.

The English-language Tehran Times quoted informed sources as saying that "Baghdad's main objective in the current talks is to secure the speedy return of its fighter planes held in Iran."

Iraq has often urged Iran to return the planes.

It said in 1991 that a total of 148 planes — 33 civilian and 115 military — were moved to Iran. Iran said only 22 Iraqi planes landed and it would not give them back without the approval of the U.N. Security Council.

"The Iraqi regime must realise that while it continues to arm and train anti-Iranian terrorists on its soil bordering the Islamic republic, it would be foolish to believe that Iran will return the planes which can easily end up in the hands of those same terrorists to be used against its citizens," the daily said.

Iran condemned Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait but remained neutral in the 1991 Gulf war when a U.S.-led multinational force drove Iraqi troops from the emirate.

Iran and Iraq, regional rivals

who fought a bitter war from 1980-1988, said after talks in Tehran last week that they should work to improve relations.

The talks brought together Saad Abdul Majeed Al Faisal, under-secretary at the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

Mr. Faisal also discussed the fate of remaining prisoners from the Iran-Iraq war. Iran says it has documents on about 5,000 Iranian prisoners in Iraq. Baghdad denies holding any.

Iran is home to Iraq's exiled Shi'ite opposition movement, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), whose guerrillas attack targets in southern Iraq.

The Iranian opposition Mujahadeen-e-Khalq group has military camps in Iraq.

"Tehran's reluctance to expand bilateral relations with Baghdad stems from the fact that Iraq simultaneously speaks from both corners of its mouth," the Tehran Times said.

"From one corner comes statements of reconciliation, while the other corner tries to convince the West that another Western investment in Baghdad's war machine is needed to bring Iran's Islamic revolution under control and to secure Western interests," it added.

Iran team in Geneva to refute U.N. report

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran said on Monday it had sent a judicial delegation to Geneva to refute allegations made in a report by a U.N. investigator on human rights violations.

Iran's judicial chief Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi said the allegations in the report were "lies" and a "political tool" against the Islamic republic.

"Presently, the ayatollah said, an Iranian judiciary delegation is in Geneva to spell out the facts on the issues mentioned in the report and the realities of the Islamic republic system," the official Iranian news agency IRNA said.

Mr. Yazdi denied Iran was holding any prisoners "for expressing their ideas."

In a report to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl of El Salvador said last week there were nearly 20,000 political prisoners in Iran and freedom of expression there was constantly under attack.

Mr. Pohl, whose 60-page report was the latest in a series he has produced for the commission criticising Iran's human rights stance since 1986, also recorded what he said were many cases of persecution of religious minorities and of women.

The report will come up for adoption by the commission in early March.

The investigator, who has not been allowed into Iran for many months, said he based his findings on both official and unofficial accounts of events in Iran and on foreign court decisions in the cases of murders of Iranian exiles.

The report noted rejection by Iran of most of the charges recorded by Mr. Pohl, and assertions by Tehran that he had little knowledge of Islamic law.

"Touching on Iran's alleged involvement in the assassination of its opposition forces abroad, Yazdi said that the global arrogance has always made efforts to attribute the

revolutionary movements and popular uprisings in other countries to the Islamic Republic of Iran," IRNA added.

Ayatollah Yazdi said Iran did not issue Mr. Pohl with a visa due to his "insincerity and his infringing of his duties."

He said Iran has repeatedly said it was willing to receive delegates of international organisations "who intend to fulfil their tasks honestly."

"Iran on Sunday said it was holding a total of 89,500 prisoners and all were well-treated."

Assadollah Lajevardi, head of Iran's prisons, said five per cent of the prisoners were women, 53 per cent drug addicts or traffickers and the rest convicted of other crimes.

He said prisoners were allowed weekly visits by their families and religious minority inmates were allowed access to their clergy.

Ayatollah Yazdi defended the current laws in Iran, including the death penalty, saying "the punishment already exists in most countries."

However, he said Iran was planning to overhaul its judiciary and he expected parliament to debate the issue shortly.

The U.N. report also pressed the authorities to end harassment of the media and allow the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to return to Iran.

The authorities expelled ICRC representatives in March 1992, accusing them of overstepping their mandate.

Ayatollah Yazdi invited representatives of international organisations to visit Iran to investigate the government's human rights record, but ruled out any further visits by Mr. Pohl.

"The foreign ministry also rejected the U.N. report on Saturday, calling it 'biased, politically-motivated and influenced by the enemies of the Islamic republic.'"

Homeless in Kabul

A trickle of homeless civilians passes by the ruins of the historic clock-tower built during the reign of King Nadir Shah (1929-33) on Monday, three days after the end of a four-day official ceasefire between forces of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Thousands of people were killed and wounded in the latest bout of battles which began on Jan. 1 (AFP photo)



60-year-old woman gives birth in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — A 60-year-old European woman who lied about her age to get an implant of donated eggs has delivered a healthy girl at an Israeli hospital, her doctor said Monday.

The woman, who had already passed menopause and could not conceive naturally, became one of the oldest on record to give birth. Her husband is 68.

The woman demanded that her identity be kept secret.

The Israeli doctor, Dr. Shlomo Mashiah, said he might not have carried out the procedure if he had known his patient's real age. "One has to get an age limit. I think age 50 is enough," Dr. Mashiah told the Associated Press.

The case of a 50-year-old British woman who delivered twins in international ethics debate and prompted some countries to consider legislation that would restrict such treatment.

Dr. Mashiah said he treated 250 older women from Israel and abroad in his egg donation programme last year. He said many of the foreigners were Jews who wanted to be sure the donor was Jewish.

The European woman, an observant Jew, told Dr.

Mashiah she was 48. Her real age was discovered two weeks ago when she checked into Maayan Hayeshua hospital in the Tel Aviv suburb of Enei Brak for delivery and a clerk checked her passport, said Dr. Moshe Rothschild, director of the hospital.

Dr. Mashiah said his patient has come to Israel for treatment after several attempts at test tube fertilisation in Europe had failed and doctors began turning her away because of age.

In Israel, she became pregnant in the first round of treatment, being implanted with donated eggs fertilised by her husband's sperm. The pregnancy, her first, was normal.

In the 38th week, her blood pressure rose slightly and Dr. Mashiah said he decided to perform a caesarean section to avoid risks.

The baby was healthy and weighed 2.8 kilograms. The woman checked out of the hospital three days later, said Dr. Mashiah, president of the Israeli Association of gynecologists and obstetricians.

He said his patient was the oldest woman he knew of to have given birth.

Violence sweeps Algeria as gas stations strike

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Violence blamed on a two-year-old insurgency left 30 more reported dead, and traffic jams plagued the capital Sunday as gas station operators prepared to strike.

Security forces said they killed 21 armed militants across Algeria last week, including six in the western area of Mascara.

The forces said among seven civilians killed was a 94-year-old woman who was killed in her home west of Algiers on Friday. They confirmed news reports that a 50-year-old woman and her 25-year-old daughter were slain Wednesday night in the Algiers neighbourhood of Bourouba.

Six members of a "terrorist group" with sawed-off hunting rifles killed the two in front of the father, then made off with jewelry and money, the forces said.

Pensioner Boudjar Keltoun, was killed at her home near Sidi Bel Abbes in west Algeria by unknown attackers, officials said.

Mohammad Tabar, 53, a veteran of the war of independence from France and vice president of a religious association, was killed Wednesday evening in Setif, eastern Algeria, the security forces said.

In a separate report security officials said that 11 armed

fundamentalists were killed Wednesday in different clashes with government forces.

Four were killed in Sidi-Kada, near the western region of Mascara and three in Boudouaou, to the east of Algiers. Another two were killed in the east, at M'sila and Constantine, they added.

Thirty-six activists were arrested the same day in different parts of the country, charged mainly with assisting armed groups.

A total of 62 armed fundamentalists have been killed by government forces since the start of February, according to an unofficial tally, while Islamic groups are alleged to have killed 14 security force people and 12 civilians.

Several public buildings were set on fire on Wednesday in Tefessour, in the western region of Sidi Bel Abbes, according to security sources.

On the same day, nine buses belonging to a public company were set on fire in Kellaz by armed men, while a college was sacked in 'Ain Serroun, near Chief, they said.

Algerian press reported a magistrate and a policeman were also killed, the first in an apartment building in the western port of Oran, the second in Constantine.

Arafat, Rabin among peace prize candidates

OSLO (AP) — The countdown to the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize has started. This year the awards committee in Oslo received 117 nominations.

"There were many nominations towards the end, and in all the total was close to last year's 120 nominations," Arne Storheim, of the Nobel Institute, said.

The nominations can be divided into three categories: 67 individuals, 21 nominations of two or three individuals and 29 organisations.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee does not reveal the names of candidates, but those making the nominations often announce their choice. Among known nominees are Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, who last September signed a historic peace accord in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat were nominated by European Council President Miguel

angel Martinez and several German parliamentarians.

The six-member committee meets Tuesday for its first closed session, starting the process leading to the announcement in mid-October. The post-mark deadline for nominations was Feb. 1.

Shortly before his death Jan. 13, Norway's late Foreign Minister Johan Jorgen Holst, who brokered the Israel-PLO peace accord, was nominated by German Parliamentarian Johannes Gerster of the Christian Democrats.

Mr. Holst can be ruled out, since the statutes of the Nobel prize committee state that the peace prize cannot be awarded posthumously. However, a shared Arafat-Rabin prize would reflect Mr. Holst's contribution.

Brazilian President Itamar Franco nominated sociologist Herbert de Souza for his efforts among Brazil's poor, the Norwegian news agency NTB said.

Czech Republic President

Vaclav Havel has been nominated for several years in a row.

Norwegian legislators nominated writer and human rights campaigner Adam Demaghi, 58, leader of the human rights council in Kosovo, the troubled southern Serbian province with a predominant Albanian ethnic population.

Maha Ghosnada, a Buddhist monk who campaigned for peace during Cambodia's civil war was nominated by U.S. Senator Clairborne Pell.

Mr. Pell had nominated the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, who won the 1989 peace prize.

Among the organisations known to be nominated are the international Red Cross, the Scouting Movement and the Salvation Army.

The U.S. Quaker movement, Friends Service Committee, nominated Thai activist Sulak Sivaraksa, who for more than 30 years has spoken out for democracy and nonviolence.

The Nobel Foundation has not announced the value of the 1994 prize. Last year it was worth 6.7 million Swedish Kronor (\$639,000) when it went to South African President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela.

The peace prize is always presented in Oslo on Dec. 10, the anniversary of the death of Alfred Nobel, a Swede who invented dynamite and endowed the prize in his 1895 will.

The Nobel prizes in literature, economics, physics, chemistry and physiology or medicine are awarded on the same day in Stockholm, Sweden.

Peace prize nominations are accepted mainly from members of national legislatures, some university professors, awards committee members, former laureates and a few organisations.

The awards committee members are appointed by the Norwegian parliament.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Group regrets Indonesian visit to Israel

JAKARTA (AFP) — An Indonesian Muslim youth organisation has expressed deep regret over a visit by four Indonesian journalists to Israel. The Muhammadiyah Youth Movement said in a statement obtained Monday that it "deeply regrets" the visit of senior journalists to Israel, with which Indonesia does not have diplomatic relations. It described the visit as "a political victory for Israel" and said Indonesian public figures should not accept such invitations. Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said last week that the government had not approved the visit and pointed out that "our immigration rules clearly forbid people from travelling there." Four journalists — from the Republik and Media Indonesia dailies, and Indonesian Business Weekly and Eksekutif magazine — left Jakarta on Feb. 8 for Cairo and then went on to Tel Aviv. They were officially invited by the Israeli chamber of commerce. But a media Indonesia spokesman said the journalists had been in the hands of Israeli foreign ministry officials since their arrival. Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, is a staunch supporter of the Palestinians and the Arabs. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin made a brief stop in Jakarta in October and held talks with President Suharto in the latter's capacity as chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement to brief him on developments in the Middle East peace process. Indonesia said afterwards it was not considering establishing diplomatic ties with Israel.

Jewish agency appoints Dinitz replacement

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Quasi-governmental Jewish Agency appointed a temporary chairman Sunday to replace Simcha Dinitz who has been charged with fraud. The agency, which processes immigrants and coordinates fundraising for Israel, named Israeli-born Yehiel Leket, 52, as Mr. Dinitz's replacement until elections in June. Mr. Leket, like Mr. Dinitz, belongs to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party. A former parliament member, Mr. Leket has built his career in the agency. He headed its youth immigrant department, and previously chaired the settlement division of the World Zionist Organisation, an agency subsidiary for overseas Jewry. His appointment was approved by the agency's board of governors in consultation with Mr. Rabin. The agency's approximately \$500 million annual budget is raised mostly from Jewish communities abroad. The organisation was founded as the governing body of the Jewish state in the making during British rule in mandatory Palestine. Since Israel achieved statehood in 1948, the agency has been a fundraising arm helping also in settlement building and absorbing immigrants. Mr. Dinitz, a former Israeli ambassador to Washington, was charged on Feb. 14 of spending \$22,000 on a company credit card, according to Israeli media reports. He announced the same day he was taking a leave of absence pending trial.

Iran, Pakistan start navy exercises

NICOSIA (R) — Iran and Pakistan began joint naval exercises Sunday which will continue for the next two weeks, the Iranian newspaper IRNA, the newspaper quoted an Iranian armed forces official as saying the joint naval manoeuvres were launched near Karachi, Pakistan's main seaport. IRNA said the newspaper added the manoeuvres were important because Iran's navy "would get a chance to put its capabilities in various fields on display." It did not mention what type of exercises they would carry out. Both countries have submarines.

Two children killed by Egyptian shell blast

CAIRO (AP) — Two children were killed when a shell, believed left from a past war with Israel, blew up in the northern Sinai, the state-run Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported Monday. MENA gave no details on how the children found the shell or what they were doing with it when it detonated late Sunday. It quoted an unnamed security source as saying the area had been a battlefield. The incident occurred near the town of Bir Al Abd, which is about 80 kilometres east of Port Said, MENA said. There have been a number of similar incidents in old war zones in the Sinai and along the Suez Canal. Most of the victims are children playing with found objects of workers handling scrap metal. The Sinai was the theatre for battles with Israel in the 1967 and 1973 Middle East wars.

Palestinian hurt in fight with Egyptians

NICOSIA (R) — A Palestinian student was stabbed in the chest in the Cypriot capital Nicosia during a dispute over girls between four Palestinians and five Egyptians, police said on Monday. Akram Mohammad, 26, a Jordanian passport holder, was being treated for a minor stab wound in a Nicosia hospital after the Saturday night incident, they added.

Lebanon invites tenders for Beirut rebuilding

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon invited on Monday contractors to offer tenders for a \$550 million plan to rebuild the infrastructure of Beirut's war-ravaged centre. The rehabilitation plan is the first practical step in a project to rebuild the capital's downtown area. The Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR) made the announcement in an advertisement in Beirut newspapers in which it said the contractors, who must be Lebanese, should restore roads, sewerage, water pipes, the electricity grid and the telephone networks. The CDR said tenders should be offered between Feb. 28 and May 13. Sources at Solidere, the \$1.82 billion private company that will rebuild the centre, said work on the infrastructure would start later this year at a cost of \$550 million. It was expected to be finished in 1999, they said. The sources said Solidere would initially pay for the infrastructure but it expected the government to set it back, either with cash or property. Under the law that set up Solidere, the government should rehabilitate the infrastructure while the company would rebuild the area.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Chateau Des Oliviers
19:00 News in Arabic
19:15 Le Monde Fantastique Des Animaux
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:30 The End Of A Brave Man
21:30 The Respected Family
22:00 News in English
22:30 The Cape Rebel
23:15 Night Court

PRAYER TIMES

04:50 Fajr
06:00 (Sunrise) Duha
11:49 Dhuhr
15:00 Asr
17:30 Maghreb
18:47 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifethel, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624591
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622346

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 63051, Tel. 625543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Raphael Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625236
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Tel. 684195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 645932
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Min./Max. Temp.

Amman 4/12/14

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Aqaba 11/19
Deserts 2/14
Jordan Valley 11/20

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 13, Aqaba 20. Humidity readings: Amman 66 per cent, Aqaba 52 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Jamil Tarif 794710
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 885446
Dr. Yousef Abdo 644916
Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 776336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salem pharmacy 636731
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Shamsi pharmacy 637460
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Majali issues budget law guidelines

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Monday issued an 18-point circular to government departments concerning the implementation of the 1994 Budget Law.

The circular contained guidelines on handling financial matters.

The instructions called on the departments to refrain from overspending by limiting expenses to the earmarked allocations.

It also urged the department to coordinate revenue and expenditure matters with the General Budget Department, refrain from budgetary item transfers announce tenders for projects in the first rather than the last quarter of the year, report to the finance ministry



FORESTING A NAMESAKE: Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday plants a tree at the Queen Noor Forest on Yajouz Road during a ceremony organised by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS). RSS employees, their families and friends took part in greening event (Petra photo)

NMC ensembled to take to stage

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Following their very successful concert in Amman a few weeks ago, the Chamber Music Ensemble of the National Music Conservatory (NMC) — Noor Al Hussein Foundation, is back tonight at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) for another performance that is guaranteed to be at least as entertaining as the previous one.

Armen Arsenakian on flute, Ali Shawki on clarinet, Mohammad Ali Abbas on violin and viola, Ali Moussa on cello and Mohammed Othman on piano will play at the RCC at 8:30 p.m.

The quintet will present a suite for cello and piano by G.F. Telemann, in three movements, the piano solo Valse d'Obermann by F. Liszt, trio for cello, piano and violin by J. Haydn, the first movement of Kramer's concerto, Elegie by Gabriel Fauri (seldom played in Jordan), the first movement of a flute concerto by W.A. Mozart, and as the finale, quite appropriately, two Hungarian dances by J. Brahms.

The NMC ensemble has already demonstrated its musical qualities that put forward not only their virtuosity and technique, but also their musicality. Their excellent interpretation of Bach's suite in B minor in the last concert was a true masterpiece.

The five Iraqi musicians all are staff members of the NMC and explained to the Jordan Times how hard it was for them to find a comfortable balance between teaching at the conservatory and practising for their own performances.

"They also expressed the wish to see more Jordanian performers present concerts. According to concert master Mohammad Ali Abbas "...it would at least stimulate us by creating a more competitive situation... it would also better serve Jordan..."

The five musicians hope to see full size symphony orchestras perform more often in Jordan.

Jordan, U.S. sign \$15m loan agreement to buy wheat

AMMAN (J.T.) — A loan agreement for \$15 million to help Jordan purchase about 100,000 metric tonnes of wheat from private U.S. sources was signed today by Minister of Finance Sami Gammoh and Douglas Keene, the U.S. charge d'affaires ad interim in Jordan.

The soft financial loan is being provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the provisions of Public Law 480 (P.L. 480).

It is being extended at the soft interest rate of 2 per cent for the first seven years, and at 3 per cent thereafter, according to a U.S. embassy statement.

Repayment will begin following a grace period of seven years in 34 annual instalments.

The \$15 million loan will be deposited in an interest-bearing account in the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), and the income generated will be spent on agricultural development projects mutually agreed upon by the government of Jordan and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Speaking after the signing ceremony held at the Finance Ministry, Mr. Gammoh called on Jordanians opposing Jordan's borrowing to instead work towards ensuring that the Kingdom becomes self-reliant.

He said Jordan hopes to stop being dependent on others and ensure sufficient basic consumer commodities for its needs, noting that the loan was part of Washington's support for the country's fiscal budget.

For his part, Mr. Keene praised the existing cooperation between Jordan and the United States in all fields, saying that the new agreement represented part of this cooperation and a move to further bolster bilateral relations.



Finance Minister Sami Gammoh (second from right) and U.S. Charge d'Affaires ad interim Douglas Keene Monday sign a \$15 million loan agreement to help Jordan buy U.S. Wheat (Petra photo)

Engineers to elect leadership from uneven candidate blocs

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A lopsided race for the leadership of the Jordan Engineering Association (JEA) has pitted a weak liberal/center-left bloc against a stronger traditionalist/conservative bloc in what promises to be one of the most politically telling elections in several years.

Known as the green and white blocs respectively, the two groups are led by former Lower House of Parliament deputy and former association President Laith Shbeilat and traditionalist/conservative incumbent president Husni Abu Ghaida.

The green bloc, which lost its control of the association to the whites in March 1992 after dominating the association for nearly three decades, has only five candidates running on its ticket. The bloc, which has no official candidate for association president, is backing Laith Shbeilat for the post.

The increasingly powerful white bloc is fielding nine candidates, one for each of the available posts on the executive committee.

In primary elections for the individual engineering disciplines last November the white bloc candidates defeated their green counterparts by a margin of 6 to 1, thus reducing the number of greens eligible to run in next Friday's elections.

The green bloc lost its official candidate for the association presidency, Musa Ma'aitah, when he withdrew his candidacy in favour of independent candidate Laith Shbeilat earlier this month.

The 1992 defeat of the greens for the leadership of the association was believed to be caused by the split in the leadership of the group. In 1992 the greens had 11



Laith Shbeilat

candidates for the presidency of the association. The sole white candidate, Husni Abu Ghaida won the race.

As an independent Islamist, Shbeilat, a former two-time association president, declined to head the green list, which is a nationalist, pan-Arab and leftist grouping, but is considered the green candidate nevertheless.

"We are however, supporting Mr. Shbeilat in his candidacy," Mr. Ma'aitah told the Jordan Times Monday.

Many observers of the race believe that Mr. Shbeilat will draw many Islamist votes that would otherwise have gone to the whites.

"The green list is, as it has always been, the opposition to the status quo, i.e. anti-peace process, anti-IMF accords etc.," a veteran green supporter told the Jordan Times.

Laith Shbeilat represents our views and thus we are all supporting him."

Many observers inside the association believe that Mr. Shbeilat's charismatic appeal and unbending political views will draw numerous votes from the more pro-establishment white list, although it contains Islamists



Husni Abu Ghaida

and Muslim Brotherhood members.

"They will be exposed as a false opposition," said one engineer of the Muslim Brotherhood-influenced white list.

The green list supporters say that at least two of their five candidates have a "good chance" of winning. They are Ibrahim Awamleh, who is running for one of the two seats allocated for civil engineers on the JEA board, and Jalal Khreisat, who is running for the mining seat.

The green candidate for the vice presidency, Jamal Duwani, as well as Ahmad Hiyassat, who is running for the electrical seat, and Musa Tarawneh are said by members to have a good chance.

The white list candidates are Husni Abu Ghaida for president, Azam Huneidi for vice-president, Bashir Gajbir and Mohammad Abu Affif for the two civil engineering seats, Abdul Fatah Abu Khayyat for the electrical seat, Ahmad Keilani, for the mechanical seat, Mohammad Abu Taba for the mining seat, Jamal Abu Salem for the chemical seat and Mohammad Akram Telt for the architecture seat.

AFM decides to raise brokerage firm capital

AMMAN (J.T.) — Brokerage firms operating at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) should each have a capital of at least JD 250,000 if they act on behalf of another party, while those which, in addition act for their own portfolios should each have a capital of JD 500,000, according to a decision by the AFM's management committee.

A statement issued by the committee following a meeting held Monday gave the brokerage firms a two-year period to comply with the new regulations.

Brokerages which must increase their capital should come up with half of the additional amount in the first 12 months, noted the statement.

Also, each brokerage should provide a JD 150,000 guarantee to the AFM as of July 1, 1994 in order to protect the rights of customers dealing with securities, said the statement.

Draft laws

The committee said it was

putting together draft regulations and legislation which would govern the operations of market-maker companies and introduce new investment instruments and, thus increase competition and help avoid sharp price fluctuations.

The statement noted that the new regulations were in line with the government's policies aimed at boosting economic growth through encouraging people to make investment and also in line with the provisions of the economic restructuring programme.

These decisions, taken at a meeting partly attended by Minister of Finance Sami Gammoh, were aimed at improving the quality of AFM services, noted the committee statement.

It said that the implementation of these regulations coincides with a package of measures which include, among other things, new regulations for investment funds that would safeguard interests of investors.

U.S. auditors end check on UNRWA services

AMMAN (J.T.) — A two-person delegation from the inspector general's office at the U.S. State Department today (Tuesday) conclude a six-day visit to Jordan and leave for the occupied West Bank.

Max Aguilar and Michael Capozzi who have been inspecting services to Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, toured refugee camps and met with officials in three countries which host refugees.

According to an official at

the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) here, the two U.S. officials are auditors responsible for examining UNRWA expenditures of U.S. contributions to the agency.

At a meeting Monday with Mr. Asem Ghosheh, director of the Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, Messrs. Aguilar and Capozzi reviewed services to the refugees in Jordan provided by UNRWA and the Jordanian government.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Abbad heads for talks in Saudi Arabia

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbad Sunday left for Saudi Arabia on a several-day visit for talks with his Saudi counterpart on arrangements for the current pilgrimage season, due to start in May. Dr. Abbad is accompanied by Director of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs pilgrimage Department Mohammad Obeidat and several officials.

House panel reviews sales tax

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Financial Committee Monday began discussions of the sales tax law which was referred to it by the House last week. The committee was briefed by Finance Minister Sami Gammoh and Director General of the Customs Department Mohammad Al Jamal on the reasons for issuing and enacting the law. In its next sessions, the committee will meet with representatives of the industrial and commercial sectors to hear their views on the draft law.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- Art exhibition by several artists at the Alla Art Gallery.
- Plastic art exhibition by artist Khalil Al Kofahl at the Yarmouk University.
- Art exhibition by Iraqi artists at the Royal Cultural Centre (8:30 p.m.-midnight).
- Computer exhibition at the Marriott Hotel.
- Photo exhibition by artist Latifa Yousef at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition of medical herbs at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre (7:00 p.m.-midnight).
- Book exhibition at the Jordan University for Women.
- Art exhibition by Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre (7:00 p.m.-midnight).
- Wood carving exhibition by artist Samer Ousama at the French Cultural Centre.
- Art and photo exhibition by several Arab artists at the Balqa Art Gallery in Fuheis (Tel. 726902).
- Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

DRAMA

- Drama in Arabic entitled "Hamlet Crucified Again" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

ABC WEEKLY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

- ABC weekly news highlights and the MacNeil Lehrer news hour at the American Centre 2:30 p.m.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

- Musical performance by the National Institute of Music band at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

SEMINAR AND LECTURE

- Seminar entitled "Information and Islam" with the participation of Mr. Ahmad Al Anani and Mr. Ziyad Abu Ghanimeh at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.
- Lecture entitled "The Future of Yemeni Unity After The Amman Accord" by Mr. Shaker Al Johari at the Arab Club for Culture and Art in Dahiyat Al Rasheed at 8:00 p.m.

CHARITY BAZAAR

- Charity bazaar at the International Exhibit Centre (3:00 p.m.-midnight).

CONDOLENCES

The Editor and staff of the Jordan Times mourn the passing of
Rashed Shahin
uncle of their colleague and friend Mariam M. Shahin
May his soul rest in peace.

UNBELIEVABLE THING

For the first time in the history
of our shops

TUTTA FAMILIA - Jabal Amman and Jabal Al Hussein
TIFFANY And TOMATO - Jabal Amman and Al Swelleh

The biggest real sales you ever heard about **40%-50%** on the most of our big collection of clothing. You'll notice the big difference yourself, you will be astonished when you see the latest in fashion from: France, Italy, Britain and Turkey. Fascinating models in all colours and all sizes, all this and more... Its your chance from now till the Happy Feast of Al Fitter. So don't miss the biggest opportunity you ever had. We're available every day from: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and 7 p.m.-11 p.m.

TUTTA FAMILIA — Jabal Amman, Prince Mohammad St. Tel. 640065
TUTTA FAMILIA — Jabal Al Hussein, Khalid Ibn Al Waleed St. Tel. 681570
TIFFANY And TOMATO — Jabal Amman, Prince Moh. St. Tel. 644661
TIFFANY And TOMATO — Al Swelleh

VACANT POST FOR NATIONAL COORDINATOR IN JORDAN (JORDANIAN) FOR U.N. PROGRAMME ON GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

The GEF NGO Small-Grants Programme is a pilot programme which aims at providing support for small-scale activities that address global environmental problems, i.e. reduce global warming, conserve biological diversity, protect international waters and reduce depletion of the ozone layer. Activities that combat desertification, land degradation and deforestation are also included. The principal objective of the programme is to identify and demonstrate community-based approaches and strategies that could reduce threats to the global environment if replicated successfully over time.

Required Qualifications:

The national coordinator for the above programme should be Jordanian. He/she should have a solid understanding of environmental problems within the country and of their implications for the global environment. He/she should have:

- ten or more years experience in the environment field and/or experience with development programmes that have conserved the environment;
- in-depth knowledge of the local NGO community and of relevant local scientific and technical resources;
- experience with small-grant (micro-enterprise) programmes;
- proven management and administrative skills; and
- experience in preparing such written materials as project summaries and assessments, programme implementation reports, evaluations and analysis.

The selected candidate will be recruited under Special Service Agreement for one year duration, as of April 1, 1994, for a monthly salary of around JD 550.

For those interested, please send your C.V. to UNDP office P.O.Box 35286, Amman-Jordan. Deadline is March 17, 1994.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
مجلس التحرير يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية من المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

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MAHMOUD AL KAYED

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MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

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Facsimile: 696183

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Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Tenants and landlords

THE DRAFT tenants' law that the Lower House of Parliament has been debating is obviously controversial since it is attempting to reconcile two opposing, albeit legitimate, concerns. On the one hand, there are landlords who need to live off the rents they collect from their properties. On the other hand there are tenants who are young and middle class and poor and expect to continue to live in their homes without being subjected unduly to the whims of their landlords.

The basic bone of contention in the new proposed legislation has therefore centred on the right of property owners to evict tenants at the end of their lease by incorporating a clause in their contract to that effect. Under the current law, the tenant can continue to occupy the rented property after the lease ends even if he and the landlord have agreed that the property should be vacated.

Clearly there are two sides to this issue. Normally parties to a contract live up to the terms of their agreement that they freely negotiate unless public policy is violated. The first legal issue therefore is whether there is a public policy issue when a landlord insists on an article that calls for an effective ending of the lease agreement at the prescribed time mentioned in it. But as public housing is not fully provided by the state, the government depends on the private sector for furnishing houses and apartments to the people who prefer to rent or are not able to build or buy their own homes. In this sense the government has deliberately made this side of the equation a public policy issue by trying to solve a problem that it cannot afford yet to solve, albeit at the expense of property owners.

Still people who invest in property and depend on them for their livelihood are also entitled to continue to be able to depend on them to make ends meet. A fair return on an investment is a cornerstone of the free enterprise system that Jordan enjoys. If we seek to protect tenants from abuse or exploitation, we must be prepared also to protect landlords from the exploitation of tenants. A balance must be struck on the basis of some kind of fair index calculated in accordance with the inflationary rate. Any such index could then be used to increase rents in accordance with this index. This is the way it is done in many countries.

As a matter of fact there is room for gradual increases in rental values under the present law. The only trouble is that it is still one sided by favouring the tenant over the landlord. The augmentation on rents is not periodic enough and unrelated to the cost of living. As long as landlords are denied to contract freely the terms of their lease agreements, the law must step in to protect their legitimate interests as well by allowing periodic review of the rent amount in a way that corresponds to the changing costs of living. Since tenants usually enjoy adjusted incomes that are tied to the rising cost of living, why deny the same corresponding adjustment to property owners? Since the existing tenant's law is being subjected to a comprehensive review, why not also differentiate between commercial and private use of properties? It would seem that state protection to tenants need not extend to commercial usage of real estate. This is a serious flaw in the current legislation and deserves rectification. The interruption of the debate on the new law could be put to good use by digging deeper into the various dimensions of the issue. The state has to be fair to all sides, particularly by not pretending that one side is rich and can be damned and the other poor and deserves favours.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE FACT that leaders of various Yemeni political groups and tribes took part in signing the reconciliation document in Amman reflects their genuine desire to protect the North-South unity forged in 1990, according to Al Ra'i Arabic daily. The paper said Monday that the Yemenis seem to be intent on further cementing their unity and paving the ground for the creation of state of the law which would rule various Yemeni institutions and prevail over Yemeni life. His Majesty King Hussein, in his address to the ceremony at Raghadan Palace, underlined the need for the Yemeni leaders to pursue actions that would pave the ground for an end to hostilities and disputes and make sure that their unity remains intact, the paper pointed out. The King also reaffirmed the need for the construction of democratic state that would safeguard human rights and protect national gains, added the paper. It said the King referred to solidarity among the Arabs as a vital pre-requisite for them to confront the challenges of the 21st century. The paper added that the historic meeting in Amman came as a crowning of the King's relentless and sincere efforts to help the Yemeni people protect their unity and embark on building a modern and free state.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily tackled the escalating cycle of violence in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, which the Israelis claim is the work of opponents of the PLO-Israeli agreement. This is a big lie on the part of the occupation authorities which have been intent on pursuing their repressive actions against the Palestinians irrespective of any agreements and in total disregard of any international principles since the occupation started in 1967, said Mahmoud Rintawi. The writer said that the Jewish settlers have in fact stepped up their atrocities against the Palestinian people because they do not oppose any PLO-Israeli agreement that would turn over any land to Arab rule. The settlers, as well as the Israeli troops, have been blaming the Islamic resistance movement, Hamas, for the violence which they themselves have created on purpose to drive the Oslo deal, said the writer.

By Roger Matthews
and
Mark Nicholson

Saudi Arabia's economic plight? Where would the spending axe fall?

THE TIMING of Saudi Arabia's announcement that it is to spend \$1bn on purchasing a fleet of passenger aircraft for its domestic carrier could hardly have been less auspicious. For while U.S. President Bill Clinton sought to reap domestic political benefit from this latest success of the U.S. aircraft industry, Saudi Arabians were watching the price of crude oil plunge below \$13 a barrel for the first time in five years.

It will not be surprising if the financing details and delivery dates for the deal take some time to work out. U.S. and Western interest in Saudi Arabia for the past year has focused primarily on the government's worsening economic plight, caused by the 20 per cent decline in oil prices. The main question waiting to be answered was where the spending axe would fall, not where the next large contracts would be placed. Although the U.S. appears now to have tied up the kingdom's aerospace markets for the next decade or more, the \$1bn order may yet be remembered as the last flourish of a bygone era, rather than a reliable guide to the future.

Saudi Arabia is, of course, no stranger to wild fluctuations in annual oil revenues. It chose for one year in the early 1980s to accept a \$100bn fall in income. But it appears to have no strategy for reversing the present slide in prices, and has only very modest financial reserves to cushion the impact. One senior banker in Riyadh is already forecasting a 5 per cent contraction in the economy this year.

If the economic trend is clear, the political response to it remains in some doubt. At the beginning of the year the government announced that it was slashing budget expenditure by 20 per cent, while in Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi ambassador, negotiated a slowdown in payments to several of America's biggest defence contractors. For the first time in its modern history, the government is also having to consider measures that will nibble at the unwritten pact between the ruling family and the rest of the population: no representation equals no taxation.

Changes to the political side of the equation have already been made, albeit with the caution inherent in deeply conservative regimes. In January, after a gestation period of three decades, King

Fahd bin Abdul Aziz finally gave birth to the idea of creating a 60-man Majlis Al Shura, or Consultative Council, whose task is to advise him and the government on selected policy issues. From a Western perspective it scarcely heralds the dawn of Saudi democracy, but within the local context it was widely viewed as an important step towards popular participation in government.

The council can only advise, and then solely on issues selected by the king. But with two-thirds of the members holding advanced degrees from Western universities, they could inject a fresh approach and perhaps a hint of urgency into the way Saudi Arabia faces up to the longer-term consequences of its descent from sudden, enormous wealth to that of a middle-income country with a per capita gross national product (GNP) less than half that of the U.K.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein can claim responsibility for having stripped away the financial safety net with which Saudi Arabia protected itself from previous sharp falls in oil revenues. The estimated \$55bn-\$60bn which it cost the kingdom to fund the international military effort required to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait forced Saudi Arabia into borrowing \$4.5bn, its first international loan. Reserves immediately available to the government now stand at little more than \$6bn. Net official foreign reserves are closer to \$70bn, but more than 80 per cent of that accounts for statutory cover for the currency, amounts held against letters of credit, liabilities to the commercial banks, and loans which will never be repaid.

The loss of reserves lends greater weight to the arguments of those calling for more emphatic official action to reduce the substantial budgetary and current account deficits. A report nine months ago by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned: "The medium-term outlook is for growing budgetary and external current account deficits because current expenditure growth, even if modest, is not expected to be matched by an increase in oil receipts. Such developments would be unsustainable and could cause damage to the economy."

Since then the forecasts on which the IMF based its assessments have worsened significantly, mainly because of the fall in the oil price, but also because the government is unlikely to have stayed within the spending limits it set itself for 1993. In 1992 it had set out with the intention of lopping some 28 per cent off spending, but in the event expenditure of about \$55bn was some \$11bn over target. The overall budget deficit expressed as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) was about 10 per cent, some three times greater than forecast, and more than double that of the U.S. Further efforts last year to trim spending are likely to have been more than offset by the decline in oil revenues.

Those flows and the slow-
down in fulfilling arms contracts should also help ease the country's balance of payments problems, which have mirrored those of the budget. The \$19.4bn current account deficit in 1992 was more than \$8bn over forecast, and the 12 per cent fall in the value of imports during the first half of last year is likely to have been more than offset by the subsequent decline in oil revenues. Further international borrowing, although probably not directly by the government, therefore seems inevitable.

"Although the U.S. appears now to have tied up (Saudi Arabia's) aerospace markets for the next decade or more, the \$6bn order (for passenger aircraft) may yet be remembered as the last flourish of a bygone era."

leaving the deficit/GDP ratio still stuck obstinately in double figures.

Against this background it was no longer credible for the government to announce, once again, that it was merely planning to cut expenditure. It was already obvious that government spending would have to decline in line with oil revenues, just to avoid the deficit worsening. On present oil price trends, and assuming a continuing Saudi output of 8m barrels a day revenues this year might not top \$30bn.

This would suggest total budget receipts of about \$38bn, compared with the \$53.6bn forecast by the IMF in its last report. This possible shortfall of \$15bn is partially acknowledged in the scant details released of the 1994 budget, which has set spending at \$42.7bn, a claimed reduction of some 20 per cent. Saudi Arabia is thus left in the uncomfortable position of having to cut deeply, but without any assurance that it can reduce the domestic borrowings needed to fund the budget deficit.

The IMF has already

down in fulfilling arms contracts should also help ease the country's balance of payments problems, which have mirrored those of the budget. The \$19.4bn current account deficit in 1992 was more than \$8bn over forecast, and the 12 per cent fall in the value of imports during the first half of last year is likely to have been more than offset by the subsequent decline in oil revenues. Further international borrowing, although probably not directly by the government, therefore seems inevitable.

The good news for Saudi Arabians, except for the princely few pocketing hefty commissions, is that cutting some of the fat from the budget is not a very onerous task. After the start of the Gulf war, the government went on a \$30bn arms spending spree, in part to thank its allies for their help. But some military advisers in Riyadh claim that little of the new equipment is required to ensure the defence of the kingdom against present known threats, especially as the U.S. personnel can swiftly make operational the equipment left behind after the war in

Kuwait.

The first modest attempt to address the situation has been the rescheduling of \$6bn out of the \$9bn in payments due to U.S. companies over the next two years for purchase of F-15 fighter aircraft. That may have provided some official justification for the decision to go ahead with the civil aircraft order. Other delays in payments, agreed with defence contractors, are likely to follow, with the possibility of out-right cancellations held in reserve.

A similarly modest start has also begun on reducing planned increases in domestic capital spending, with Saudi Aramco, the national oil company, scaling down or cancelling projects, including a new \$100m head office, and the heaviest spending ministries reviewing their plans for the year.

The astonishing \$2.1bn spent on subsidising wheat production in 1992 — making the desert kingdom the world's sixth largest exporter — was due to have been cut last year by \$700m. The crop also absorbs an estimated 90 per cent of the nation's annual water consumption, a commodity that on present rates of extraction has a lower life expectancy than oil, which would seem to make the argument for further sharp subsidy cuts not just financially sensible but imperative for the nation's long-term viability.

But the ripest target of all is still not discussed publicly in the kingdom. As the IMF team was told by officials last year: "Political and social considerations preclude a reduction in subsidies or an increase in fees or charges." In other words, hands off one of the world's most comprehensive welfare states, which guarantees its citizens a virtually tax-free environment and provides many basic services at no, or little, cost.

It is that issue which, for the senior members of the House of Saud, appears to lie at the heart of maintaining unchallenged political power. But it is equally an issue that will not go away, with the indigenous population having officially topped 12m and growing at about 3.5 per cent annually, one of the highest rates in the world.

The burden of recurrent and infrastructure spending on items such as education,

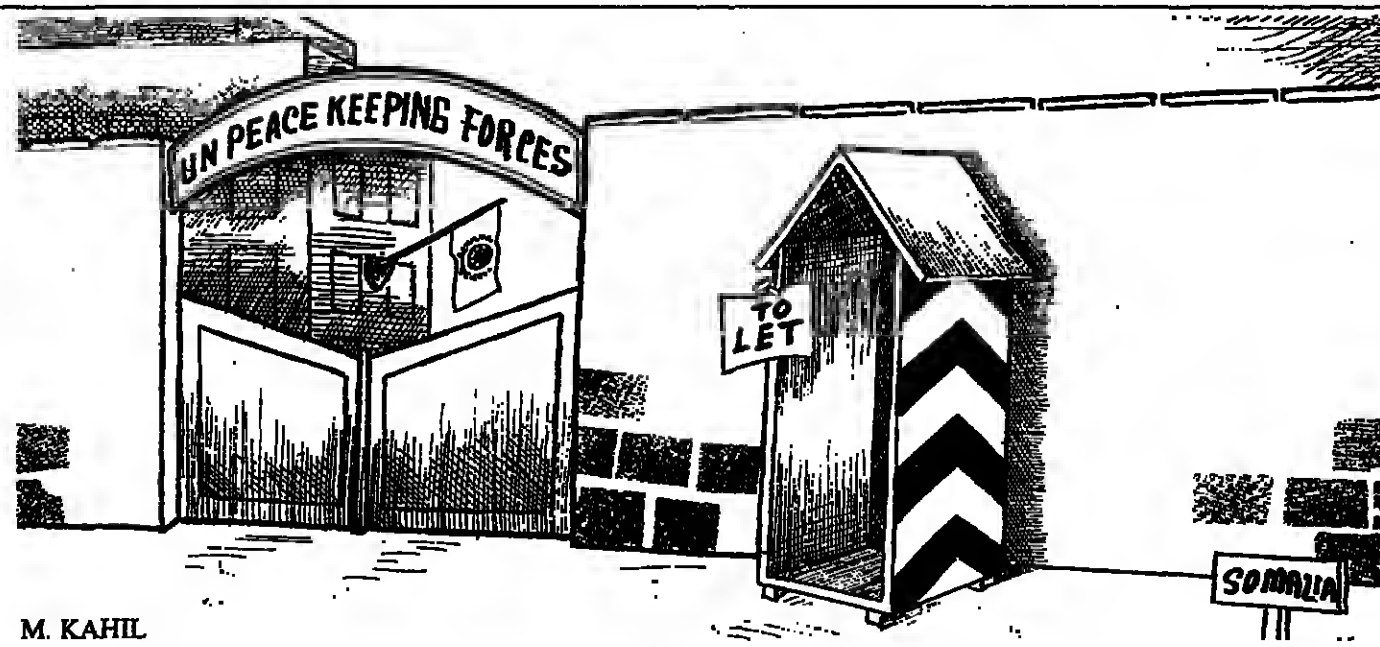
healthcare and housing is certain to mount for the rest of the decade and beyond. Unless the balance of world oil supply and demand confounds most present predictions, which includes the assumption that at some point Iraq will resume exports, the government will have to supplement budget spending cuts with revenue-raising measures and find more ways of channelling individual wealth into the national exchequer.

One of the long-held tenets among professional Saudi watchers is that the greatest threat to the stability of the regime would come from a serious breakdown in the cohesion of the extended royal family. If social equity was to play any part in the government's future revenue-raising plans, it is precisely that group of people who would be expected to contribute most. This is possibly where the newly formed Consultative Council will eventually find its niche: as the cautious proponent of ideas which are common-place among nations with similar income levels, but still politically incorrect in Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, the government will continue to count its blessings, foremost among them 25 per cent of the world's known oil reserves and the possibility of being able to continue producing 8m barrels a day for at least the next 100 years. Saudi Arabia can also derive some satisfaction that its two greatest potential external threats, Iraq and Iran, are mired in their own domestic problems, while continuing peace efforts are defusing the threat of further Arab-Israeli conflicts. The decision to press ahead with the \$6bn aircraft order serves in part to underline those strengths.

It also reinforces the government's desire not to rock the domestic boat more than absolutely necessary, which is, as ever, likely to prove the best guide to future Saudi policy. Even so, there is little prospect this year of much cheering news, to offset the country's more sombre economic long-term prospects. More than a passing thought should be spared for the responsibility resting on the shoulders of the national soccer team on June 20, when they take the field for their first World Cup match, against Holland, in Washington. A win, even a goal, might be worth more politically to the House of Saud than a dollar on the price of oil.

The Financial Times



Algeria edges closer to peace

By Catherine Simon

WITH NO acknowledged negotiations between the Algerian government and the Islamic fundamentalists, Algerians residents are reduced to speculation. The smallest clue in an official statement gives rise to confused and heated assumptions, particularly now during Ramadan.

The fact that the Commission for a National Dialogue (CDN), which includes three members of the armed forces, publicly referred to "contacts" with the leaders of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) has been seen as a first sign. The appointment four days later of defence minister General Liamine Zerroul to the "presidency of the state" seemed to confirm speculation that after considerable hesitation, the authorities have openly given the army the job of settling the issue. Yet nothing tangible has happened since then.

In his first public statement on Feb. 7, President Zerroul called for "serious conversations" with "all the political forces of the nation without

exception". The local press saw the address as an appeal designed to rally the people, although it was little more than a repetition of what he had said last October in an interview with the pro-government daily El Moudjahid.

Nevertheless, there are differences. General Zerroul has since become the country's top man and this time his plea brought an unexpected reaction: the following day, Anouar Haddam, a representative of the FIS in exile known for his hardline Islamic fundamentalist stances, made an unusual statement condemning violence.

Although he did not go as far as condemning the killing of civilians, Mr. Haddam expressed the hope that there would be an end to the killing of people "not involved in security operations using force." But there is still a long way to go before a truce can be agreed, and the FIS and its offshoots are not ready, any more than is the army. The most chilling proof of this came on the same day, Feb. 8, when a French reporter was murdered in the Algiers kasbah.

If "Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj (the two top men in the banned FIS who have been in prison for over two years) are in a position to provide a solution to Algeria's political crisis, they are welcome to take part in the national dialogue", said General Abdelmajid Cherif, who is close to President Zerroul, in a statement to the weekly Algerie-Aktuelle.

In its wake, El Sharq El Awsat, a Saudi daily published in London, announced on Feb. 9 that "a general amnesty for all political prisoners" would be proclaimed "in the next few days". That same evening the Algerian press issued a denial which seemed to shoot down yet another rumour. But the question is whether the item in the Saudi daily was an unfortunate error or an attempt to test the mood. At the same moment in Washington, the Compass agency announced that four "Islamic fundamentalist leaders", including Abdelkader Hachani, were on the point of being released from prison and placed under house arrest "on the new Algerian president's orders". Although Abassi

Key dates in the Bosnian tragedy

PARIS (AFP) — International efforts to halt the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina may be entering a critical phase with a diplomatic initiative from Russia and NATO willingness to intervene militarily. Here is a list of key dates in the conflict.

1992
- Feb. 29: Bosnian Muslims and Croats vote overwhelmingly for the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, then a Republic of Yugoslavia.
- April 5: The Federal Serbian Army launches its siege of Sarajevo.
- April 6: The European Community (EC) recognises Bosnian independence, triggering a declaration by Bosnian Serbs of their own republic.
- April 7: The United Nations Security Council authorises the deployment of 14,000 U.N. troops in former Yugoslavia.

- May 22: Bosnia joins Slovenia and Croatia as new members of the United Nations.
- Sept. 15: The United Nations approves the deployment of several thousand additional troops for U.N. protection forces (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia.
1993
- March 1: U.S. forces begin operation to parachute food and medical supplies into eastern Bosnia.
- March 25: Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic, a Muslim, and Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban sign the Vance-Owen peace plan in New York.

- April 12: NATO launches its "Deny Flight" operation aimed at enforcing the air exclusion zone.
- April 21: The United Nations designates the Srebrenica enclave a "safe haven".
- May 6: Bosnian Serbs reject the Vance-Owen plan.
- June 18: The United Nations approves the deployment of 7,600 additional U.N. troops — joining 9,400 already in Bosnia — to protect safe havens.
- Aug. 9: NATO announces its readiness, with U.N. authorisation, to launch air strikes on Serb positions if the Serb siege of Sarajevo and other safe havens continues or if UNPROFOR units are attacked.
- Aug. 20: Lord Owen and new negotiator Thorvald Stoltenberg present a new overall settlement proposal to the warring parties, which is rejected in September by the Bosnian Muslims.
- Dec. 3: Geneva talks on dividing Bosnia-Herzegovina along ethnic lines end in failure.
1994
- Jan. 11: At Brussels summit, NATO heads of state and government say they are ready, with go-ahead from the U.N. Security Council, to stage air strikes to prevent the strangulation of Sarajevo and the safe havens, as well as other threatened regions.
- Feb. 9: Bosnian Serbs and Muslims reach agreement on immediate Sarajevo ceasefire, and agree to remove their heavy weapons and place them under U.N. control. The accord comes just hours before the NATO council, meeting in Brussels, acts on a U.S.-French proposal and threatens to launch air strikes unless all heavy weapons above Sarajevo are removed from a radius of 20 kilometres from the centre of the city. Ultimatum set to expire at midnight GMT, Feb. 20.
- Feb. 17: Russia announces that Bosnian Serbs have agreed to meet NATO ultimatum.
- Feb. 18: UNPROFOR announces that some 400 Russian U.N. troops are expected in Sarajevo ahead of the NATO deadline.

The Guardian Weekly.

Freedom continues to elude East European press long after communism

By Sandra Lacut
Agence France Presse

VIENNA — Despite the collapse of Communist rule, press freedom remains elusive across Eastern Europe where governments are taking advantage of lingering economic hardships to tighten their grip on media organisations.

"Attempts to control the media are evident in Central Europe, but also in the Balkans, the Baltic states and the republics of the former Soviet Union, under the cover of the real economic difficulties facing the former Communist countries," said Johann Fritz, director of the Vienna-based International Press Institute (IPI).

"The situation exceeds the bounds of tolerance in Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and in Serbia, where the state controls all media and production facilities and where economic difficulties are such that the existence of the press is threatened," he added.

In 1993, 290 newspapers and 266 magazines, out of a total of 2,264 registered in 1992, were shut down in Ukraine.

Mr. Fritz quoted an unnamed Ukrainian journalist as saying that "our country will

soon boast a law on the press but the press will no longer exist." This statement, Mr. Fritz added, "might apply to many former Communist countries," such as Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and Russia, "where while officially recognising freedom of expression, the authorities are not prepared to give up their control over television and the press."

In Russia, President Boris Yeltsin reasserted control over the state television and news agencies following frequent television appearances by ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy on the eve of the December elections. But "the economic threat is even greater than the political one. Inflation may bring an end to state subsidies without which many dailies will disappear," said Mr. Fritz. "Some (papers) no longer publish because of poor distribution, which is virtually exclusively in the hands of the state. The current legislation discourages foreign investors, whose presence in Eastern Europe has played a key role in improving press freedom."

In the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Slovenia, the media are doing better economically thanks to the ac-

tive participation of Western investors.

"Despite liberal laws, governments retain considerable influence over the media. In Poland, arrests and prosecutions for harming the state or lack of patriotism are frequent," said Mr. Fritz. Several television journalists who produced programmes deemed to be "anti-government" were fired.

In Hungary, a third of the journalistic staff at the state radio are to be laid off within the next three months, officially for "budgetary reasons," although the journalists maintain the move is politically motivated.

In Romania, many journalists refuse "to be muzzled by the government, as was the case under Communist rule," said Mr. Fritz.

"Eastern European journalists are (also) victims of economic mafias which do not hesitate to kill when the press investigates cases of corruption," he added, pointing to the recent assassination of a Lithuanian journalist by a crime syndicate.

In Slovakia, the government of Premier Vladimir Meciar, citing "economic imperatives," cut off state subsidies to opposition media organs.

By Ade Obisesan
Agence France Presse

Lagos — Plans by Nigeria's military rule to organise a constitutional conference early this year have sparked fears among Nigerians that their country may be sliding towards break-up along ethnic and religious lines.

Since the beginning of February, Nigeria's media, especially weekly magazines, have made possible disintegration of Nigeria their headline stories.

"If Nigeria breaks (...) the shape of what will come", "will Nigeria fall apart?" "Get set for the worst (...) the nation may grind to a halt." "Why the north is afraid of national conference." "Make up or break up, the choice facing Nigeria". "Constitutional conference: threats to Nigeria's existence", are some of the big headlines of these magazines.

The reports infer that the national conference, designed by the present military regime to find solutions to the nation's problems, might just be the catalyst needed to break up the country.

Already many powerful religious and political leaders from the Muslim-dominated north are reported to have manifested their opposition to the national conference.

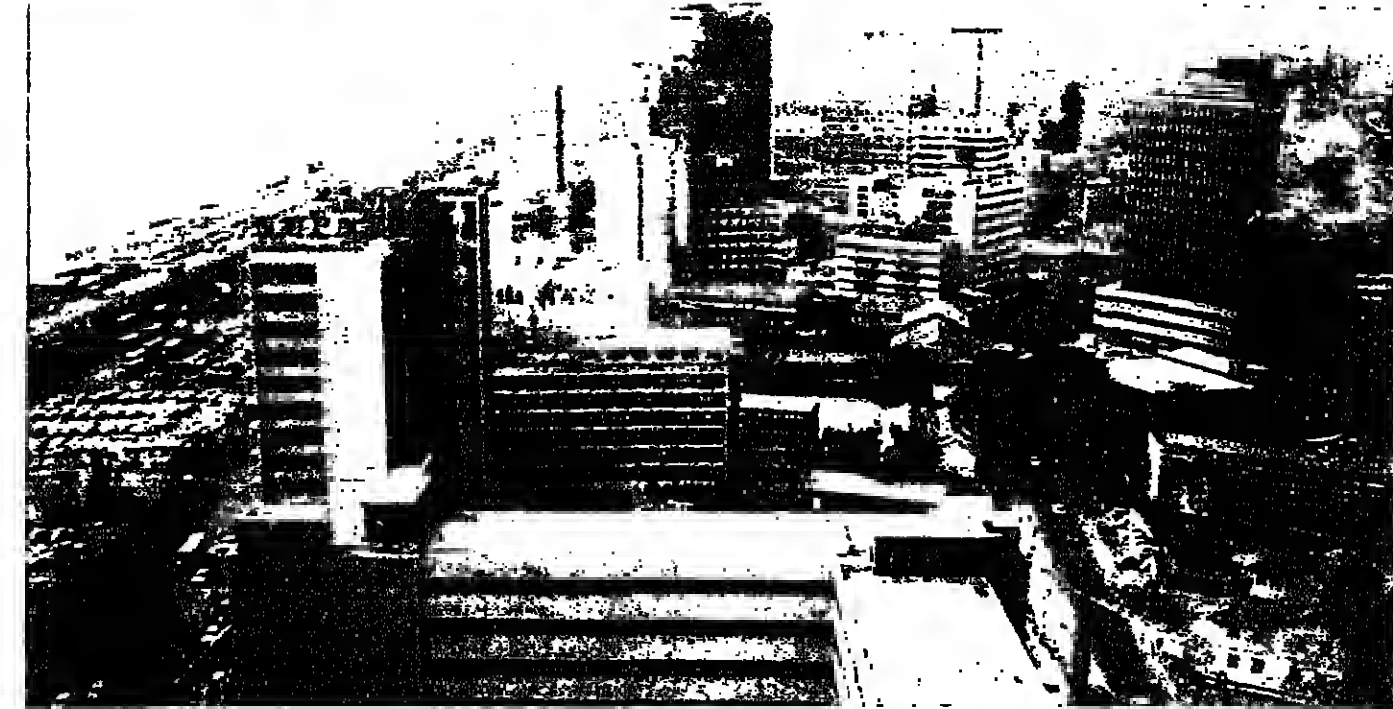
Newspapers, the most powerful of which are located in the south, indicate that the north would suffer more should the country break up because at present northerners benefit significantly from revenue derived from oil produced in the south.

Former Foreign Minister Bolaji Akinyemi and former secessionist leader and warlord of the "Biafra republic", Emeka Oduemegwu-Ojukwu, have warned against the consequences of disintegration.

An attempt by the east to break away from Nigeria in 1967 plunged the country into a 30-month civil war in which at least 1 million people died.

Since the end of that war in January 1970, unity has only been maintained by successive military regimes which have crushed pressure for a confederal system or secession.

The present psychosis of disintegration is attributed partly to the annulment of last June 12 presidential elec-



SET FOR THE WORST: Prospect of instability are denying Lagos the economic boom it had expected (File photo)

Looming fears Nigeria prepares for constitutional parley amidst concerns for its unity

tion, which millionaire politician Moshood Abiola claimed to have won.

That election, judged free and fair by local and international observers, was cancelled by the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida for alleged irregularities.

The cancellation caused anger and resentment among the ethnic Yoruba in the south-west of Nigeria, from where chief Abiola originated.

For the Ibos in eastern Nigeria and the minorities in the southern and south-eastern parts, the complaint is either over alleged marginalisation or unfair distribution of resources derived from national resources, especially oil, derived from their territory.

Ibos have used advertisements in national dailies to complain that they are still being socially and politically marginalised and penalised

for their failed attempt to secede from Nigeria 27 years ago.

Other southern minority groups, particularly the Igbo in rivers state, consider themselves as "outsiders" because, according to them, re-

group. Thousands of people have died in the past three years in religious riots involving Muslims and Christians in parts of the north.

Of the 11 heads of state who have ruled Nigeria since

cussed at the constitutional conference, for which no date has yet been set, are still being worked out by a commission set up specially for that purpose.

However the regime of General Sani Abacha has made clear it will not compromise on the issue of existence of Nigeria as an entity.

In a statement, human rights and pro-democracy groups represented by Campaign for Democracy (CD) north said that the conference was a ruse by the Abacha regime to prolong its stay in power.

"Whatever happens, I think it would be in the best interest of Nigeria to remain one. Most nations of the world are forging unity and not working towards disintegration. Nigeria should draw lesson from the ex-Soviet Union", an African diplomat told AFP.

"The present psychosis of disintegration is attributed partly to the annulment of last June presidential election which millionaire politician Moshood Abiola claimed to have won."

venue derived from oil extracted from their territory is only being used to develop other parts of the country.

Among Christian minority groups in central and northern Nigeria, the main fear is continued political and religious domination by the Muslim Hausa-Fulani ethnic

independence from Britain in 1960, only three were from the south and they were all Christians.

Of the seven from the north, six were Muslims while the only Christian was general Yakubu Gowon (1966-75).

The main issues to be dis-

NATO Bosnia commander rose from recruit to admiral

By Edith M. Lederer
Associated Press

LONDON — Adm. Jeremy M. Boorda, the NATO commander in charge of all operations in former Yugoslavia, is the first sailor in the U.S. navy to climb from the lowest enlisted rank to four-star admiral.

"It says something about our country — that people can work hard and do well and be recognised for it," said the 55-year-old grandson of Ukrainian Jewish immigrants.

Adm. Boorda dropped out of high school, fibbed about his age and joined the navy when he was 17 because of family problems. Being an officer, let alone an admiral, wasn't even a dream when he enlisted in 1956.

Now, he's being touted as the next chief of naval operations, to succeed Adm. Frank B. Kelso, who announced this week that he will retire in April.

Since receiving his fourth star in 1991, Adm. Boorda has been commander-in-chief of U.S. naval forces in Europe and commander of NATO forces in Southern Europe — a job that puts him in charge of any NATO airstrikes around Sarajevo if the warring parties don't pull back their artillery by Sunday night's deadline.

As U.S. navy commander, based in London, he is responsible for 28,000 American sailors from Norway to Africa to South Africa to Israel. It is the NATO job in Naples, Italy, where he is now in charge of about 12,500 allied forces, that has put him in the spotlight.

NATO forces have dropped thousands of tonnes of food to starving Bosnians. NATO ships and aircraft have enforced U.N. sanctions. Since last year, NATO pilots have been training for what would be the 16-nation alliance's first offensive military action — and they've been ready for months.

"I've got a lot of airplanes, a lot of pilots who now know what to do, how to do it and are ready to do it if we need to," Adm. Boorda said in an interview last fall.

A gregarious, compact man with a ready smile, Adm. Boorda likes to think of himself as a good leader. Even off the record, nobody has a bad word to say about "Mike" Boorda, as he is called by friends.

Born in South Ben, Ind., he grew up in Chicago and was living in Mokena, Ill., where his family ran a clothing store, when he joined the navy.

After going awol for a few days on his first liberty, Adm. Boorda was subjected to some tough navy discipline. A chief petty officer who took on interest in him sent him off to finish school with an order to do well.

"He really taught me that succeeding was something special and I worked my tail off," Adm. Boorda said.

During his first year in the navy, he married Bettie Moran of Norman, Okla., whom he met in school following boot camp in Oklahoma. Their first child, David, was born physically handicapped.

He once said this made him grow up very fast. Within six years, Adm.

Boorda reached the rank of petty officer first class, serving primarily in naval aviation. In 1962, he was selected for officer candidate school. His first sea tour as an officer was off Vietnam.

In 1966, as a lieutenant, he got his first command — the USS Parrot, a coastal minesweeper with a crew of 43 and four officers. It remains his favourite command.

"I didn't know what I didn't know so I wasn't scared," he said. "I was the days before people had computers, so they couldn't send you a lot of messages We would go out our little job and it was great."

Yemeni leaders leave for home

(Continued from page 1)

now move to put its provisions into force.

Mr. Alawi was speaking before leaving for home after attending the signing ceremony as a representative of Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'eed of Oman.

Oman and Jordan are working towards ensuring that the Yemeni people achieve their aspiration and reconciliation, Mr. Ben Alawi said.

Asked on prospects of improved relations among Arab countries Mr. Alawi expressed hope that the Yemeni reconciliation would serve as a first step towards a wider reconciliation among the Arab states.

Mr. Ben Alawi said that Oman had been in close contact with the leaders in Sana'a and Aden to contain the dispute and end the differences.

Clash mars Yemeni accord

(Continued from page 1)

to return to their barracks. It also calls for a swift integration of the northern and southern forces.

The six-month-old dispute between President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his vice-president, Ali Salem Al Beidh, has threatened to rupture the May 1990 merger between the conservative, tribal North Yemen and the south, once the Arab World's only Marxist state.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Mr. Beidh flew home on Monday. It gave no other details.

Mr. Saleh also headed back to Yemen, and Petra quoted him as saying before leaving that the Yemeni crisis was over.

King Hussein, who brought the two leaders together in Amman on Sunday, met them again on Monday to try to defuse the crisis. It was not immediately clear whether he succeeded.

The two leaders had delayed their departure.

King Hussein met them at the Hashimiyah Palace near Amman, where they were staying.

"The King is trying to prevent the Yemeni peace process from collapsing and wants to contain the problem before the two Yemeni leaders return home," a Jordanian official said.

Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh, who had not met since the feud erupted last August, reluctantly shook hands and exchanged kisses in front of King Hussein after the signing ceremony on Monday.

four hours, ended at 2 a.m. Jordanian and Yemeni officials said.

They described the atmosphere as tense and dry. "He (the King) was trying to break the ice between the two leaders but obviously this needs some time," one Jordanian official said.

Differences between the two leaders had threatened to tear apart Yemen.

The accord provides for military, economic, administrative and political reform which Yemeni politicians hope will end Yemen's worst crisis since the merger.

Jordanian officials said the King has proposed a timetable for implementing the accord.

Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh have been at odds despite the 1990 union. But the lingering friction between northerners and southerners has intensified over the division of political and economic power in the infant republic since parliamentarian elections in April last year, the first multi-party ballot held on the Arabian Peninsula.

No party won a majority in Yemen's 301-member parliament. Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and Mr. Beidh's Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), who ruled jointly since the merger, lost 177 seats between them and looked likely to continue their coalition.

But the northern Islamic Islah party, with 62 seats, demanded a share of power.

Clinton sees Serb compliance

(Continued from page 1)

bring back big guns. — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl said he hoped a high-level international conference could be called to work out a peace plan for former Yugoslavia.

Fighting raged in parts of Bosnia outside the newly pacified confines of Sarajevo, the U.N. protection force said.

Russia's defence minister urged the United States to send peacekeepers to Sarajevo, but U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry told him Washington had no such intention. Interfax news agency said.

Special envoys from Russia and the United States will attend a meeting of interna-

tional officials in Bonn on Tuesday to try to maintain the momentum for a lasting peace settlement in Bosnia.

Serbian nationalists staged noisy rallies in Belgrade to thank Russia for helping prevent NATO air strikes against their Bosnian kin and to accuse the West of betrayal.

— U.N. convoys will resume aid deliveries to central Bosnia on Tuesday after NATO lifted its immediate threat of air strikes against Serbs around Sarajevo, the U.N. said.

— Muslim forces will try to sweep back Serbs and Croats over broad areas of Bosnia following the U.N. demilitarisation of Sarajevo, Bosnian Deputy Defence Minister Arif Pasalic was quoted as saying.

PLO, Israel resume talks

(Continued from page 1)

are discussing the release of Palestinian prisoners. At least 9,000 Palestinians are believed held in Israeli jails, and PLO leader Yasser Arafat has said repeatedly that he will not sign a final agreement with the Jewish state until he has a schedule for their freedom in hand.

Hassan Asfour of the Palestinian delegation and Jacques Neriah, a top aide to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak

Rabin, announced that there would be no public statements about the negotiations until a news conference at mid-afternoon on Wednesday.

Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, who has been close to the talks, told Israel's army radio Monday that "this week, by all signs, should be a good week."

He added: "But of course, in one week such complicated negotiations cannot be completed."

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Opening on Tuesday evening 22 Feb. 1994.
Exhibition will be open to public on Wednesday and Thursday 23, 24 Feb. 1994 from 10:00 am till 12:00 am at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel

سوف يتم افتتاح المعرض مساء يوم الثلاثاء الموافق ٢٢ شباط ١٩٩٤ وستكون الدعوة عامة أيام الأربعاء والخميس الموافق ٢٣، ٢٤ شباط ١٩٩٤ من الساعة العاشرة صباحاً حتى الثانية عشرة مساءً منتصف الليل.

سيقام المعرض في فندق الأردن انتركونتيننتال.

S. Africa appeals to rightists over poll terms; 34 die in violence

JOHANNESBURG (RI) — The South African government and the ANC appealed to rightists Monday to accept the transition to democracy and defend themselves after at least 34 people died in weekend violence.

The two main political power blocs began separate talks in Johannesburg and Pretoria on terms for settling the constitutional dispute in which conservative groups are boycotting the country's first all-race election on April 26-28.

"We urge them to do South Africa a favour and not to plunge this country into a crisis," chief ANC negotiator Cyril Ramaphosa said at the start of the Johannesburg meeting.

Police reported at least 34 deaths in political and factional violence over the weekend, including the massacre of 15 African National Congress (ANC) supporters preparing for a voter-education meeting in the rural town of Creighton.

Other deaths followed a rally in Natal province, homeland of the Zulus, addressed by conservative Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

At least six people died, many were injured and 24 houses were burned down in clashes around Johannesburg, police said.

Government Minister Rolf Meyer urged the Freedom Alliance of black and white parties boycotting the election to accept a package of compromise proposals being hammered out with the ANC at a meeting of the multi-party

negotiating council. "The government wants to plead with the leaders of the alliance to accept these proposals as they are. Let all South Africans participate in the democratic process," he said.

Alliance Chairman Rowan Croje told Reuters he was not optimistic, but had not given up hope. "I don't think it's all dead, but I wouldn't put it beyond that."

He said before a meeting of the Alliance Executive Committee in Pretoria that the right-wing parties, including Mr. Buthelezi's Zulu-dominated Inkatha, had only been given the new proposals late Saturday.

Mr. Buthelezi reaffirmed at Sunday's rally that he planned to boycott the election, which will be the first to include the country's five-to-one black majority.

He repeated his demand for key constitutional concessions including regional autonomy and recognition of the Zulu monarchy as his price for participation in the poll.

The multi-party negotiating council dominated by the ANC and the government met on the outskirts of Johannesburg to formalise constitutional amendments offered last week.

Negotiators agreed to reopen registration for the election until March 7 and to approve separate ballots for national and regional governments.

They also proposed to create a framework for a so-called Africaner Volksstaat (homeland) Council to represent whites seeking self-

determination in a separate homeland.

Communist Party negotiator Joe Slovo told Reuters the new deadline for parties to join the election race was final.

The independent Human Rights Commission says violence in South Africa has killed 14,000 people since February 1990, when President F.W. de Klerk started dismantling apartheid.

A bomb damaged an apartment building occupied by black and white residents in central Pietermaritzburg early Monday, but police said no one was hurt in the blast.

Police Colonel Martin Leonard told reporters the damage was caused by an explosive device other than a hand-grenade, but said police had not yet identified the type of explosive.

About 30 bomb explosions mainly in Transvaal province this year have been attributed by police to right-wing movements opposed to the dismantling of apartheid and plans for a watershed all-race election in April.

The latest explosion, which happened at about 2.15 a.m. and shattered windows and damaged the foyer of the block, followed a tense weekend in the Natal province stronghold of Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Zulu people.

Earlier in the weekend, fighting erupted outside Pietermaritzburg after Mr. Buthelezi had addressed a rally of Inkatha supporters.

At least one man was killed and another was seriously

wounded in clashes with the Inkatha crowd headed home from the rally through territory controlled by the ANC.

Meanwhile, the black Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) threatened Sunday to renew its guerrilla war against white domination if South Africa's land is not returned to blacks, the South African Press Association said.

PAC President Clarence Makwetu told about 5,000 supporters at a rally in Cape Town's Khayelitsha shantytown that the return of land taken from blacks during almost 350 years of white domination would be the focal point of the party's campaign for the first all-race election in April.

"If we must go back to the hush to reclaim our land then that is what we will do," he said.

The PAC, which fought white rule with the slogan "one settler, one bullet," recently suspended its armed campaign.

Opinion polls indicate that the PAC will win less than five per cent support in the April 26-28 election, which will be the first to include the five-to-one black majority.

But PAC officials insist their support exceeds the backing for African National Congress, which usually polls between 30 and 70 per cent support in opinion surveys.

The PAC, which broke away from the ANC before both parties were banned by the white government 34 years ago, said it would implement race and gender employment quotas.



South African government chief negotiator Rolf Meyer receives a blessing from a witch-doctor, after they slaughtered a goat and sprinkled him with its gall. Mrs. Meyer was on an election tour in Soweto (AFP photo)

'N. Korea to set inspections date soon'

VIENNA (R) — North Korea, under potential threat of U.N. economic sanctions, expects to set a date for inspection of its nuclear facilities after further talks with the United States this week, a U.N. official said Monday.

"We had a telex from them over the weekend saying they would have more talks with the Americans this week then set a date for inspections and issue visas," International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) spokesman David Kyd said.

IAEA Director-General Hans Blix was expected to brief the nuclear watchdog agency's 35-member board of governors on the situation later Monday at IAEA Headquarters in Vienna.

The 120-member agency is responsible for applying safeguards measures to ensure no signatory of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) embarks on nuclear weapons development, as North Korea is suspected of doing.

The secretive Communist state flatly denied the charge. But until North Korea dropped its arguments last Tuesday and agreed to inspection of seven declared nuclear sites, the IAEA board of governors was set to report it to the U.N. Security Council, raising the prospect of an embargo.

The agency had hoped that, following the accord, Pyongyang would issue visas to its experts by the weekend so they could leave for North Korea before the governing body met.

But no visas have been issued so far.

"Because of available flights, the earliest our inspectors can now leave for North Korea is by the middle of this week," spokesman Hans Meyer said Sunday.

Officials said last week that the board would have been more assured of North Korea's intention to play ball with the agency if inspectors were on site by the time of the board of governors meeting, but they were prepared to be patient.

IAEA experts are due to carry out tests, change film in monitoring cameras and check seals at the sites, mostly at Yongbyon, 100 kilometres north of Pyongyang.

The inspections can only check whether any nuclear material has been diverted to non-peaceful uses. The agency's knowledge of North Korea's nuclear industry would thus be back to where it was before the row erupted 12 months ago, officials said.

The agreement does not include access to two mysterious sites, also at Yongbyon, where the United States and other Western governments suspect North Korea of pursuing a clandestine nuclear arms programme.

Any further progress on persuading North Korea to allow inspections here largely hinges on talks between Pyongyang and Washington.

Earlier Monday, North Korea denied it had agreed to even routine checks of its declared nuclear facilities, and warned the United States not to misrepresent last week's accord.

"This was largely directed at the United States," warning them not to over-construct the agreement," Mr. Kyd said of the headline statement issued by the North Korean Foreign Ministry.

The statement recalled that North Korea had threatened in 1993 to quit the NPT over demands for "special inspections" of sites it insisted were military facilities unconnected with any nuclear programme.

Any attempt to enlarge last Tuesday's accord to include the two suspect sites would be tantamount to an attempt to drive (Pyongyang) out of the treaty," it said.

"If the United States again put the brakes on a solution to the nuclear issue, attaching an unreasonable condition, or resorting to pressure, it would be impossible to implement the points already agreed upon between the DPRK (North Korea) and the IAEA."

After fires and quake, L.A. faces walls of mud

LOS ANGELES (R) — A fierce Pacific storm brought more misery to disaster-weary southern California Sunday, triggering mudslides, flooding roads, trapping residents in their homes and causing three deaths in freeway accidents.

Drenching rains took their heaviest toll on the celebrity enclave of Malibu, where hillsides stripped of vegetation in last fall's wildfires collapsed, sending torrents of mud rushing into the garages and ground floors of several million-dollar mansions.

The intensity of the pre-dawn storm caught emergency officials by surprise, and they called on residents to evacuate voluntarily if their homes were in immediate danger.

Several dozen people fled to higher ground, but most homeowners chose to stay put, battling with shovels and sandbags to stave off the flow. Floodwaters rose to the door handles of some cars lining the streets of ritzy Malibu neighbourhoods.

A man driving a blue Mercedes had to be pulled out by Los Angeles County Life Guards when he stalled in a muddy quagmire. The car was later buried nearly to its roof as mud poured down from nearby canyon.

Fire Department crews rushed in to rescue a family of three trapped in their inundated canyon home. A mother and her two children were carried to safety when a flooded-out bridge left them stranded in their car. No injuries were reported.

The latest storm, which unleashed much of its fury before dawn, caused havoc on a freeway system already crippled by last month's magnitude-6.8 earthquake.

Rain was blamed for nearly 75 traffic accidents, two of them fatal. One man died when he was thrown from his car after it spun out of control on a Los Angeles freeway, and two others were killed when a truck jackknifed and hit their car in Orange County, highway patrol officials said.

Sections of the busy Pacific Coast Highway were turned into rivers of mud. Bulldozers worked to divert the flow as it threatened dozens of exclusive homes. Huge boulders crashed onto some mountain roads, making them impassable.

Power was knocked out briefly to more than 1,600 homes in mostly exclusive sections of Beverly Hills and Santa Monica.

In Malibu, where many Hollywood celebrities live in beachfront houses, some homeowners stood by with picks and shovels.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Attacks mar Togo's parliamentary poll

LOME (R) — The final phase of Togo's political transition to multi-party democracy culminated with a series of attacks on polling stations during Sunday's second round parliamentary elections. Military observers and the West African country's Fors 93 security force drawn from the police and gendarmes were unable to prevent the violence. Togolese officials and electoral observers said gangs of youths ransacked 36 polling stations in Lome district near the town of Notsé, 90 kilometres north of Lome, and 14 stations in two opposition districts in the central town of Sokode. Ballot boxes were burned at one polling station in Lome, but elsewhere electoral observers said voting passed off without serious incident. A few people were arrested in Lome for using stolen voting cards. The vote, in 24 districts where no candidate won a majority in the first round, will complete Togo's first multi-party parliament to share power with military president, Gnassingbe Eyadema, head of state since 1967. Whoever wins control of parliament will hold the balance of power under the constitution, but will also inherit a mass of economic problems and a legacy of political violence and mistrust.

Mexican rebels arrive for talks

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (AP) — Maya Indian rebels came out of the jungle again Sunday. But this time they came for peace talks that they hope will lead to land and political reforms. Escorted by Red Cross vans and a police car, at least 18 rebels, including leader Subcomandante Marcos, arrived at the main plaza of San Cristobal De Las Casas, the town they seized on New Year's Day. Hundreds of Red Cross workers, civilian peace workers and military police armed only with truncheons surrounded the 16th century Roman Catholic cathedral in the heart of the city where the talks will begin Monday. Government peace negotiator Manuel Camacho Solis and Roman Catholic Bishop Samuel Ruiz travelled to the rebels' Lacandon Forest strongholds east of here Sunday morning to escort the leaders back to this city of 75,000 people. They sped into the plaza past a cordon of peace workers holding back tightly packed spectators, a few of whom cheered for the rebels. The rebels all had their faces hidden with the traditional ski masks and three had broad-brimmed Indian hats with multicoloured ribbons.

Georges Watin, 'the Jackal', dies

ASUNCION (AP) — Georges Watin, whose attempt to assassinate President Charles De Gaulle was portrayed in the novel and movie *The Day Of The Jackal*, was buried Sunday. Mr. Watin, 71, died Saturday of a heart attack at his home in Asuncion. A small group of friends attended the burial at a cemetery outside the capital. Algerian-born Watin fought against the Algerians' war for independence and opposed Gen. De Gaulle's decision in July 1962 to grant the North African land its sovereignty. Mr. Watin was head of "Mission Three," a branch of the secret army organisation, or OAS, and among nine assassins organised to kill Gen. De Gaulle. On Aug. 22, 1962, bullets shattered the windows of Gen. De Gaulle's limousine as it drove through a Paris suburb, but the president was unscathed. In a 1991 interview, Mr. Watin said the initial plan was to "kidnap him, bring him to justice before a military court-martial, and only then execute him" for supporting Algeria's independence. But the plotters expected Gen. De Gaulle's drive through Petit Clamart would be at sunset, according to an almanac. It was still daylight when the president arrived, prompting the decision to shoot him on the spot. Mr. Watin told the Spanish daily *El Pais*. The assassination attempt was the basis for Frederick Forsyth's 1971 novel, *The Day Of The Jackal*, which was made into a movie. Mr. Watin was condemned to death in absentia in 1963 but pardoned by an amnesty law in 1968. After fleeing to Switzerland and later to Spain, he settled in Paraguay in 1965.

Bangladesh honours language martyrs

DHAKA (R) — Tens of thousands of Bangladeshis walked barefoot to a national memorial in the capital Monday to honour people killed in a 1952 language dispute in former East Pakistan that helped spawn Bangladesh. Hundreds of police kept security tight as streams of people lay floral wreaths at the Shaheed Minar Memorial near Dhaka University beginning at one minute past midnight. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and her ministers were the first to arrive, followed by leaders of opposition parties, students, teachers, cultural groups, and ordinary men, women and children. On this day 42 years ago, police shot dead six people, including four students, for demanding Bengali as a state language co-equal with the official language Urdu in what was then East Pakistan.

U.N. backs plan that angered Aristide

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United Nations, in an effort to jump-start the failed Haitian peace process, has implicitly backed a plan that angers exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Secretary-General Boutros Ghali in a letter to the Security Council Sunday made clear he and his envoy for Haiti, Dante Caputo, favoured a plan put forward by Haiti legislators in Washington this weekend and backed by the United States.

Mr. Aristide has rejected the new plan, which does not specifically call for his return and gives no timetable for any of its objectives, although it contains most of the points in the U.N.-brokered Governors Island accords of last June.

Mr. Aristide fears the military that ousted him in a 1991 coup, will continue to run the country in all but name.

France, Canada and Venezuela, who with the United States form a U.N. advisory group on Haiti, so far have been more sympathetic than Washington to Mr. Aristide's position.

Chinese province warns against ethnic unrest

BEIJING (R) — Leaders in China's far-western Qinghai province have been ordered to step up vigilance against ethnic saboteurs following anti-Chinese Muslim riots crushed by the army last year.

The Qinghai Communist Party committee decree, reported in Qinghai Daily editions seen Monday in Beijing, was a rare admission of persistent ethnic unrest in the vast far west.

Muslims and other ethnic groups in Qinghai, Ningxia, Gansu, Ningxia and Sichuan have rioted often in recent years to oppose heavy-handed Chinese rule.

Many underground cells advocate secession, a sentiment that has grown with the rise of Islamic nationalism across Central Asia, and raised alarm in Beijing.

"All leaders and the broad masses of party members, officials and public must maintain a high degree of vigilance and clear-headed understanding," the committee said. "We must resolutely tackle and handle any behaviour that destroys stability."

The Qinghai Party organ, which directs the local government, said the huge province remains at risk of instability despite the military suppression of nationwide anti-Chinese protests last year and the Oct. 7 storming by paramilitary police of Dongguan Mosque in the Qinghai capital, Xining.

"Even after we legally suppressed the disturbances of a tiny faction of evil-doers last October, small numbers of evil-doers are still carrying out incessant acts of sabotage," it said.

"They start rumours, whip up popular emotions and use all kinds of despicable means in futile attempts to destroy our province-wide struggle for ethnic unity and our hard-won peaceful and unified rule," it said.

Chinese sources said more than 30 Muslims arrested after the Dongguan assault were still awaiting trial but that about 40 escaped, including a prominent Muslim leader.

Word of the decree came a day after Xinhua News Agency confirmed parts of a Reuters report about an army massacre of rival Muslim groups in neighbouring Ningxia province.

The official agency affirmed that four men were sentenced to long prison terms, but left unmentioned that the defendants were Muslim clerics who were hating to head Ningxia's Zheherenyne sect or that Chinese troops violently crushed the feud.

Chinese sources told Reuters last week that Paramilitary People's Armed Police gunned down 20 Muslims in May, 1993, crushing a violent two-year-old battle to succeed the late Zheherenyne leader Ma Tengxi.

Four sect leaders were con-

Kohl's CDU seeks to steer a winning course

HAMBURG (AFP) — Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) tries this week to chart a course to ensure that the party and its leader Chancellor Helmut Kohl will be safely returned to power in October.

Eight months ahead of federal legislative elections, the CDU begins a three-day congress in this snow-bound northern port city Monday with all the signs against it.

Unemployment is at a record four million, the prospect of a major strike by industrial workers looms closer by the day, and the opinion polls have for months been favouring the Social Democrat Party (SPD) opposition.

Latest polls give the SPD 37.5 per cent, against 34 per cent for the CDU and its Bava-

rian sister party, Mr. Kohl himself was credited with 26 per cent of preferences Sunday, against 35 per cent for SPD leader Rudolf Scharping, by the Forsa Social Research Institute.

But Forsa head Manfred Guellner and Mr. Kohl himself point out that twice before, in 1987 and in 1990, he came out from behind the polls only to win in the end. The chancellor and the party have time to mobilise, and analysts say it is much too early to write them off yet.

In an opening speech to the 1,000 or so delegates, Mr. Kohl is expected to issue a call to arms to try to Scotch what he regards as a premature defeatism based only on the pundit's predictions.

Centre-piece of the congress

is a new basic programme of nearly 100 pages entitled freedom and responsibility, defining Christian Democracy in a united Germany today, which delegates are to fine-tune and adopt Tuesday and Wednesday.

It tackles such issues as European integration, and declares attachment to "free development of the individual" and an "ecological and social market economy."

For a classic mainstream party of the right, the chosen themes of debate, revolving around ideas of peace, freedom and the environment, appear to want to steal clothes from the Social Democrats, at a time when the SPD, also bent on victory on Oct. 16, appears more moderate than for years.

TIN said all the nuns were in Draphi Prison for taking part in pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa since 1989.

The official from the Reform-Through-Labour Administration said one nun had her jail term increased from five years to 14 years and another from nine years to 17 years.

Both officials confirmed a total of 14 nuns had been punished.

China is under strong pressure from the West to improve its human rights record. The issue of Tibet is specifically mentioned in U.S. President Bill Clinton's executive order stating he would only extend China's key most favoured nation (MFN) trading privileges if there was human rights progress.

China last month freed two Tibetan political prisoners in a move described by the United States as "a step in the right direction."

'Money could grow on trees in N. Zealand'

WELLINGTON (AFP) — Pine trees have the potential to make New Zealand one of the world's richest countries per capita, according to a new study reported in the Sunday Times. Piers McLaren of the state-funded Forest Research Institute told the newspaper that forestry could put wealth into the hands of people whose only assets were land and time. "Radiata pine is arguably one of the most profitable crops that can be grown over much of New Zealand," he wrote in the Radiata Pine Growers Manual. Cost-benefit studies show rates of return of seven to nine per cent, higher than inflation, and prices are still rising. The report said that last year mature trees were selling for 700 to 800 New Zealand dollars (\$402 to \$459) each and one hectare (2.47 acres) of 28-year-old, well-sited and tended trees were worth \$140,000. A stand of five to 10 hectares of mature radiata was likely to be worth more than a 500-hectare sheep and beef farm, the report said. Radiata pine accounts for about 90 per cent of existing and new plantations because it can yield up to 50 cubic metres (135 cubic yards) of wood per year. Mr. McLaren was quoted as saying that New Zealand had seen such a rapid and fundamental change in land use since the late 19th century.

Indian schoolboy takes parents to court

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A 15-year-old schoolboy has taken his parents to court for trying to force him into marriage with a girl a year younger in return for a dowry. Rajeev Tanwar moved an application before the Delhi High Court Sunday, saying he was too young to get married and asking the court to stop the wedding. The marriage would be illegal under Indian law, which stipulates that a boy should be at least 21 years old and a girl 18 for marriage. Under-age marriages are, however, rampant, with wedding normally arranged by parents after a matching of horoscopes and negotiations over a dowry from the bride's family. "I want to state that I do not want to marry now as I am only 15 years' old," Rajeev, a junior school student in a New Delhi suburb, said in his petition. "I want to study and have a career. My parents and relatives are marrying me off despite my appeals. I request you to help me stop the marriage, otherwise injustice will be done to me," the teenager said. Rajeev went to court with the help of his school principal, who was told of his predicament by classmates in whom he had confided. His father, Chaudhry Likhli Ram Tanwar, has already printed and distributed invitation cards for the wedding set for Thursday. A wealthy transporter and landowner, Tanwar wanted his son to get married and follow the family business, the petition before the court said. Rajeev's marriage to Sunita, 14, was arranged last year. The girl's family had promised a Maruti Suzuki car — a middle-class status symbol in India — and 100,000 rupees (\$3,333) in cash as a dowry, which also is outlawed, but widely practiced by orthodox Hindus. "I am against such a system," said Rajeev, who appeared in court Sunday to file his petition. "That is why I picked up courage to approach some people who could help me," Judge R.K. Sharma reserved his ruling on the petition.

Hong Kong population hits 6 million

HONG KONG (R) — The population of Hong Kong, one of the most crowded territories on earth, passed six million the census and statistics department said Monday. The department estimated the population rose two per cent in 1993 to 6,019,900 at the end of the year. Births accounted for only 35 per cent of the 117,000 increase last year, with people arriving in the British colony from outside making up the rest. Hong Kong's population fell to only a few hundred thousand during the Japanese occupation of World War II. But it later soared mainly due to immigration for China. The territory, due to return to Chinese rule in 1997, crams its increasingly prosperous population into just 1,037 square kilometres, about two-thirds the size of greater London which has a population of about 6.7 million.

8 JBF board members quit

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Most board members of the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) Monday announced their joint resignation after an inconceivable decision that seemed to have plagued their work in the last couple of months.

After a heated regular session Monday afternoon, eight of 11 board members signed a mass resignation that would be presented to Minister of Youth Abdullah Oweidat Tuesday.

"We seemed to have reached a dead end after irreconcilable differences that we worked hard to overcome, but to no avail," JBF Vice-President Samir Janakat told the Jordan Times.

"We therefore decided to give the minister a fresh chance to appoint a new board that will hopefully better serve the game," he said.

According to informed sources, the "irreconcilable differences" were mainly between JBF President Isam Ammani and spokesman Fa'eq Abu Halimeh.

The latest row erupted after Ammani sided with JBF regulations and allowed Al Hussein and Al Husn clubs to register their players after the expiry of the official permitted time during which all clubs registered their players for competition they would take part in during the upcoming season.

The JBF's troubles seem to have begun after the national team's participation in the Asian championships in which the team returned home after a series of disappointing results.

Preparations for the championships including travel expenses to Indonesia had cost the cash-strapped federation over JD 50,000. After the team's 10th place finish and return, the JBF allowed its Russian coach to name a new national team made up of the younger, less experienced players.

The veterans of the game voiced their dissatisfaction at that, and threatened to boycott the JBF's annual All-Star Tournament, usually held during Ramadan.

Last week, the JBF announced the cancellation of the tournament, which proved to be a bad omen as it would have been the first of the season's competitions.

Eleven board members make up the JBF, which last year saw the election of 6 members representing competing clubs, they are: Samir Janakat, Qasem Al Abed, Farid Allan, Eid Al Mulki, Jamal Zaki and Hashem Al Sukhni. The last three did not sign the mass resignation.

The appointed members are Ammani, Abu Halimeh, treasurer Wasim Zu'mot, Majed Majali and Sadeq Hayek.

The JBF, one of the most active of the Kingdom's sports federations, seems to have been hit by a series of rows and differences among board members for the past two years — a fact that threatens the development of the game, as set programmes and schedules seem never to be met and most regular competitions are often put on hold or cancelled because of recurrent postponements.

A previous JBF board had also submitted their mass resignations in December 1992 after former President Ahmad Haddad quit over differences with the Ministry of Youth and the Jordan Olympic Committee.

Knicks' defence stifles Bulls

NEW YORK (R) — Patrick Ewing scored 20 points and got 18 rebounds as the New York Knicks clamped down the defence on the Chicago Bulls for an 86-68 victory late Sunday.

The 68 points represented a season-low for the Bulls and the lowest by a New York opponent since the Knicks held Indiana to 64 Dec. 10, 1985.

"From the defensive standpoint we pretty much accomplished what we had to do and it was just a great win for us," said New York coach Pat Riley.

John Starks added 16 points for the Knicks, who averaged a 98-80 loss in December to Chicago.

"We played aggressively at the defensive end and that made the offence a lot easier to come down and execute," said Starks.

The New York bench outscored Chicago's 33-15 as Derek Harper scored 13, Anthony Mason 11 and Hubert Davis 9.

Scottie Pippen scored 25 and B.J. Armstrong 15 for the Bulls, who lost three straight since the All-Star break, tying a season high.

In Denver, Mahmoud Abdul Rauf had 19 points and Reggie Williams 18 to rally the Nuggets past the Atlanta Hawks 97-92.

The Nuggets, who trailed by as many as seven in the third, outscored the Hawks 14-3 in the final 4:19 of the game to win their third straight and ninth in their last 14 games.

The loss by Atlanta (35-16) and the Knicks' win over Chicago (34-16) left New York (36-15) with the best record in the eastern conference.

At Indiana, Derrick McKey scored 27 points to guide the Pacers to a 101-95 victory over their former team, the Seattle SuperSonics.

McKey, traded before the season for Detlef Schrempf, was 7-for-11 from the field and 13-of-13 from the line. He added 9 rebounds and 5 assists. Schrempf was held to 6 points.

The Pacers (25-24) have won nine of their last 10 and went over the .500 mark for the first time this season.

In Charlotte, Mark Price scored 22 points, including four in the final 1:02 of overtime, to lift the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 105-101 victory over the Hornets.

Bobby Phillips led the Cavs with 23 points.

At New Jersey, Benoit Benjamin scored 18 points on 9-for-9 shooting and added 10 rebounds in just three quarters to carry the Nets to their fifth straight victory, a 122-101 thrashing of the Washington Bullets.

The Nets have won 13 of their last 17 while the Bullets have lost nine of their last 11.

New Jersey's Armon Gilliam led all scorers with 24 points.

In Milwaukee, Shaquille O'Neal scored 38 points and pulled down 14 rebounds as the Orlando Magic beat the Bucks 109-104.

Dennis Scott added 18 points and Nick Anderson contributed 15 for the Magic, who



Eric Leckner of the Philadelphia 76ers (left) and George Lynch of the Los Angeles Lakers battle for a rebound during their match. The Lakers defeated the Sixers 107-95 (AFP photo)

Russia's Egorova gains 6th career gold; Wiberg wins Sweden's 1st

LILLEHAMMER, Norway (AP) — A record-tying sixth gold medal did not dull the thrill of Olympic triumph for Lyubov Egorova, and Pernilla Wiberg raised Sweden from the depths of despair by winning gold on the Alpine slopes Monday.

Also on the 10th day of the games, Austria's Emese Hunyady, silver medalist in the 3,000, upset the favourite in the women's 1,500-metre speedskating race.

With six days left to compete, Russia had a total of 17 medals, followed by Norway with 16 and Italy with 14.

"It feels good to be the best," Egorova, Russia's jubilant "ice bird," said after anchoring her team to victory in the women's 30-kilometre cross-country skiing relay.

The 27-year-old Egorova thus became the second triple gold medalist of the 17th Winter Olympics, joining Norwegian speedskater medalist Johann Olav Koss. Adding the three Albertville golds to the three she won here, Egorova tied the record haul of six won by Soviet speedskater Lydia Skoblikova at the 1960 and 1964 games.

Egorova has now won gold or silver in all nine Olympic races in which she had skated in the last two years.

Wiberg gave Sweden its first medal of the 17th winter games by demonstrating her slalom wizardry and winning the two-day women's combined.

"I know it's the first gold medal for Sweden, and I hope this will improve the team's morale and bring us other medals," Wiberg said.

The combined event also restored a shred of honour to the Swiss Alpine ski team, which had not medaled in the first nine days of the Lillehammer Games. Vreni Schneider, the overall World Cup leader, won silver behind Wiberg.

At Hamar's speedskating arena, Hunyady thwarted the hopes of Germany's Gunda Niemann to rebound from a fall in the 3,000 and win her third career gold medal.

Niemann, double gold medalist at Albertville, was further frustrated in Monday's 1,500 when Russia's Svetlana Fedotkina, knocked her from second into third place late in the competition. Niemann had to settle for bronze.

The cross-country win gave Russia its eighth gold medal of these games, as many as host Norway. But the silver medal in speedskating put the Russians into the overall lead of the medals race.

On a per capita basis though, Norway was way ahead. There are only 4.3 million Norwegians to 150 million Russians.

Until Wiberg's victory, the repeated chants of "Heia Norge" — go Norway — had been most grating on Swedes, a Scandinavian neighbour and a one-time winter sports power with double Norway's population.

No Swede cheered more Monday than King Carl XVI Gustaf, who thrust his fist into the air as Wiberg sped across the finish line on her final slalom run.

Russia had more hopes for gold in Norway's ice dancing finale. Two Russian pairs were in the top three after the compulsory and original dance programmes. But 1984 gold medalists Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean of Britain, making a comeback to the Olympics, were tied for first, along with Maia Usovva and Alexander Zhulin.

In Monday's cross-country relay, the Russians needed Egorova's anchor leg to overtake the pace-setting Norwegian quartet.

Raising her ski poles in victory, Egorova acknow-

ledged the cheers of the capacity crowd of 31,000 in the Birkebeineren ski stadium. It didn't matter that most of the flags being waved from the stand were Norwegian.

"Coming into the stadium was a fantastic experience," said Egorova, who overtook Norwegian anchor Anita Moen a kilometre into the final 5k leg.

Russia clocked 57 minutes, 12.5 second for the gold. Norway took the silver 30.1 seconds behind, and Italy, paced by a strong anchor performance by Stefania Belmondo, clinched the bronze, 11:30.1 behind.

Egorova is entered in two more races here and has a chance to overtake the all-time medal winner — Raisa Smetanina, a cross-country skier who competed for the Soviet Union and the unified team. Smetanina's 10 career medals included four golds. Egorova has three silvers in addition to the six golds.

At the Hafjell slalom course, Sweden's Wiberg moved from fifth after Sunday's downhill portion and withstood a challenge by Schneider in Monday's second slalom run to win by just .13 of a second. Her aggregate time was 3 minutes, 51.5 second for the slalom and downhill.

Slovakia's Alenka Dovnan won the combined bronze medal.

Katja Seizinger of Germany, the downhill gold medalist and leader after Sunday's combined downhill, straddled a blue police halfway down the 59-gate Hafjell course and was disqualified.

"I knew I didn't have much of a chance in slalom," Seizinger said. "It's 50-50 that I miss a gate, so I took some risks. I was surprised with my slalom performance for as long as it lasted."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Marlin wins Daytona 500 by car length

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida (R) — Sterling Marlin held off Ernie Irvan to win the Daytona 500 motor race Sunday. Marlin's Chevrolet outdistanced Irvan's Ford by a car length. Terry Labonte and Jeff Gordon, both in Chevrolets, finished third and fourth. Marlin, who earned 253,575, covered the 200 laps around the 2.5 mile (four km) Daytona International Speedway in three hours, 11 minutes, 10 seconds. A speed of 136.931 mph (222.549 kph).

Gullit set for Dutch comeback

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Soccer star Ruud Gullit is set to make his peace with Dutch coach Dick Advocaat — just in time for the World Cup. Advocaat has announced that Gullit was ready to return to the Dutch side May 23. He agreed that Gullit, who plays for Italian club Sampdoria, has agreed to return without any pre-conditions. Gullit, aged 31, fell out with Advocaat in June 1993 and quit international football. Holland qualified without him but Gullit would be the only return if Johan Cruyff took control of Holland's World Cup campaign. That looked sure to happen until Barcelona manager Cruyff and the Dutch Football Federation were involved in a clash over money and Cruyff, who had been expected to replace Advocaat, withdrew his World Cup candidacy. Gullit has won 64 caps for Holland since 1981 and scored 17 goals. He had previously retired from international football in September 1992 after criticising the side's style of play but had returned after a four-month absence.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH
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AN IMPOSSIBLE ASSIGNMENT

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ A K 8 7 5 3
♥ A J 8 7 4
♦ A J 6
♣ K J 6

EAST
♠ Q J 10 9 7 2 ♠ 9 5 3
♥ A Q 10 9 7 5 8 4 2
♦ 9
♣ K Q 10 5

SOUTH
♠ 4
♥ K 5
♦ A Q 10 9 8 7 3
♣ 4

The bidding: South West North East
3 ♠ 4 ♠ 5 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠

"Quite remarkable," enthused the kibitzer. "To make his contract declarer had to surrender a trick in a suit where there were no losers and avoid losing a trick in a suit where there were two." This was the hand that occasioned the ebullience.

Two-suited hands are not handled well by a takeout double, so West elected to cue-bid four clubs. While the hand was somewhat light in terms of high cards, there was no disputing its trick-taking ability. North's raise to five clubs was sound at any vulnerability and West judged well not to compete further.

EUROPEAN SOCCER ROUNDUP

Leaders hold their own as rivals apply pressure

PARIS (AFP) — The leaders of the top European leagues resisted pressure from their rivals at the weekend — single goal victories appearing to be the order of the day.

Italian leaders AC Milan, Spanish pacesetters Deportivo la Coruna, Portugal's top side Benfica and MSV Duisburg of Germany — all topped their divisions after 1-0 wins.

Meanwhile in France, runaway top club Paris St. Germain didn't score at all.

Danielle Massaro scored AC Milan's goal on the stroke of half-time to clinch the serie A leaders' away win at Lazio. A 70,000 crowd turned out to see England international Paul Gascoigne dominate in midfield but he was later to join three Milan players in the referee's book.

Top challengers Juventus were held to a 1-1 away draw against Torino after German Andreas Moeller was sent off just after the half hour following two bookings. It did not stop Juventus's ten men taking the lead through a fine free-kick from European 'Footballer of the Year' Roberto Baggio in the 53rd minute. Daniele

Fortunato earned the home side a point with a 64th minute equaliser, catching out goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi with a long-range shot.

Sampdoria, without England international David Platt, joined Juventus on 32 points — six points behind AC Milan — after scoring a stylish 3-1 victory over struggling Atalanta. Dutch star Ruud Gullit, who is set to make his peace with the Dutch national side in time for the World Cup, scored two of the Sampdoria goals.

In Spain Deportivo felt the pressure after Saturday wins by both Real Madrid and Barcelona. But they came away with both points from Real Sociedad Sunday thanks to a 72nd minute goal by Ribera.

Barcelona, eliminated from the Spanish Cup by second division Betis and beaten in their last two league matches, took their frustration out on visiting Osasuna by going on a scoring spree. Johan Cruyff's men slammed eight goals past a side which had two men ordered off at half-time — Romario scoring a hat-trick. Real Madrid also won their

home clash in the derby against Atletico — Morales snatching a winner seven minutes from time.

A last-minute goal from Vitor Paneira gave Benfica their win over Beira Mar and kept them three points clear of rivals sporting in the Portuguese first division.

Sporting beat Belenenses 3-0 away Saturday.

MSV Duisburg, promoted at the end of last season, defeated Werder Bremen — courtesy of a 76th minute goal from Peter Koezele. They now have 27 points, while Bayern Munich and Kaiserslautern, who both scored away wins, have 26.

Former leaders Eintracht Frankfurt and second-placed Bayer Leverkusen both slumped to surprise defeats.

In France, Marseille failed to cash-in on Paris St. Germain's goalless draw against Lyon Saturday. Bernard Tapie's side stayed seven points adrift in the title chase after being beaten 1-0 at Bordeaux. A header from Santos after just nine minutes did the damage to Marseille's hopes in a bruising match in which

seven players were booked.

Paris Saint Germain extended their unbeaten run to 22 games — but were left kicking themselves after dropping a crucial home point. Unbeaten at home all season but without suspended international defender Alain Roche, PSG produced a colourless performance.

Brazilian playmaker Rai, whose future at the club is in doubt after transfer talks linked him to Sao Paulo, increased the speculation by being substituted in the second-half.

Third-placed Auxerre, on 32 points, also failed to close the gap after a 1-1 draw at Lens but sixth-placed Cannes bolstered their hopes of a European berth next season by defeating rivals Montpellier 2-0.

Michael Madar scored seven minutes before the break and Franck Priou added the second — his 13th of the season — after 58 minutes.

Belgian midfielder Enzo Scifo got Monaco back on the winning track, scoring in the 15th minute to set his side on the way to a 2-0 win over visitors Sochaux.

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PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE	
GHOST	Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 8:30, 10:30	COVER GIRL	Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" No Where To Run Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "2" The Rookie Shows: 12:30, 3:00	AMMOUN THEATRE Jabal Luweibdeh, Sayegh Commercial Centre Coming soon: The grand opening of the theatre	presents a play entitled: Al Iim Nuron A popular political comedy Actors: Abeer Issa, Daoud Jalajel, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali in addition to other comedians Every night at 8:15 Tickets are sold all day	Nabil and Hisham Theatre presents Ahlan Arab Summit Conference (play) daily at 9:15 p.m. Theatre is closed Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays	

Militants renew warning to Egyptians to withdraw funds

CAIRO (AP) — A militant group has issued a "final warning" for bank depositors to withdraw their money and urged foreigners not to side with Egypt's "dictator, fascist" government.

The messages came in a claim of responsibility sent Sunday by the outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah to western news agencies for a killing earlier in the day of a plainclothes policeman in southern Egypt.

"We remind, for the last time, all clients of interest banks that the deadline for them to settle their accounts expires in two days," the group said in its faxed message. It warned that people would "regret" keeping their money in banks.

The group's first warning to withdraw money early this month was based on Islam's prohibition against charging interest. Since then, suspected militants placed homemade bombs outside at least four banks in Cairo. Two went off but caused little damage.

The fax also warned tourists and foreign investors to "remain neutral and not to side with the dictator, fascist system."

"We tell them frankly: the stand you are taking is opposed to the Islamic movement and its just rights, and is not in your interest," the warning said. Earlier, the group warned tourists and foreign investors to leave Egypt to avoid getting caught in the violence.

Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah has claimed responsibility for most attacks on police officers and on foreign tourists in a campaign launched two years ago to replace President Hosni Mubarak's secular government with an Islamic state.

More than 300 people have

been killed, including militants, security forces, Coptic Christians and three foreign tourists.

The group claimed responsibility for two recent attacks on foreigners. Last Saturday, four people were wounded in a shooting on a train, and a week ago a bus carrying Romanian workers was fired on. No one was hurt in that incident.

In its claim of responsibility for the policeman's killing Sunday, the Al Gamaa gave the same reason that it did for the train attack — revenge for the sentencing to death of three men convicted of attempting to assassinate Mr. Mubarak.

It said the men were "plotting to carry out the death sentence of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in fair revenge for the killing of hundreds and thousands of Muslims."

A military court sentenced two soldiers and a civilian to death last Wednesday for a failed attempt to assassinate Mr. Mubarak by mining a military airport before a presidential visit in November.

The government has kept the case secret and the militants persistent reference to it is apparently meant to publicize it.

Bankers said they have not heard of a significant increase in withdrawals since the Gamaa issued its warning to depositors.

Mohammad Kheera, director of security at Bank Misr, said his bank stepped up security after an employee found one of the four bombs next to a teller machine. Explosive experts defused the bomb but the bank has been on the lookout ever since.

"We have increased our own security inside the bank and the Ministry of Interior has

provided guards for outside the bank," Mr. Kheera told Reuters.

He dismissed the threat of an escalation in the Gamaa campaign as "hot air."

The Gamaa said it planted the Bank Misr bomb and two others on the same day outside Bank Ahli and a branch of the Central Bank of Egypt because the banks were "usurious monuments which have become huge treasuries for the loot plundered by senior officials from the toiling masses."

Most Egyptian banks offer interest but there are also Islamic banks that treat depositors as shareholders in their investments. The chief mufti of Egypt has given a fatwa (legal ruling) approving some forms of bank interest.

The fourth bomb was outside the Alexandria Kuwait Bank on Feb. 15. It broke the windows of the bank and two cars parked nearby but again caused no casualties.

The bomb was planted "to make owners of Arab and foreign usurious banks understand that they are targets as much as Egyptian banks and that the deadline also applies to them," the Gamaa said.

Omar Mohanna, assistant general manager of Misr Iran Development, brushed off the warning.

"We don't give a damn. I think it's ridiculous, people have forgotten the warning," Mr. Mohanna said. "I think the matter was overblown and no one takes them seriously. We have not increased security because we have sufficient measures that have been in force for a long time that we're maintaining."

He said his bank has not enforced any policy changes since the militant warning and that none of his depositors had withdrawn their money.

Yemeni leader leaves

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday sees off Yemeni Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh, who on Sunday signed a reconciliation and reform accord to end a six-month-old political crisis along with President Ali Abdullah Saleh and 35 other Yemeni leaders (Petra photo).



Saudis launch fund-raising for Jerusalem; Olmert dismisses move as propaganda

Khatib: Funds welcome but have to come through Jordan

Combined agency dispatches

SAUDI ARABIA has launched a campaign to raise funds for the renovation of Islamic holy shrines in occupied Jerusalem, drawing an Israeli response that the Jewish state reserved the right to have the final say in any renovation projects in the holy city.

Sheikh Azzam Khatib, head of the Awwaq Department in Jerusalem, said the Israelis had no role in maintaining the Islamic holy shrines and said the Saudis were welcome to contribute to renovate them, but that all funds have to be channelled through Jordan.

Jordan, from whom Israel occupied East Jerusalem in the 1967 war, has maintained its role as the guardian of the Islamic holy places.

His Majesty King Hussein donated \$8.5 million in 1992 from his personal funds to restore the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa mosques in Jerusalem. The first phase of the restoration project is expected to be completed this month.

The Saudi campaign to raise funds was reported by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), which said King Fahd had issued instructions to Prince Salman, the emir of Riyadh, to lead a drive through all regions in the kingdom for donations, "that will be channelled to rehabilitate and salvage the Islamic shrines in Holy Jerusalem."

Prince Salman will be issuing an appeal to citizens and expatriates to donate funds "to help save the shrines from the threat of ruin as a result of the Israeli measures aimed at obliterating the identity of Arab and Islamic Jerusalem," the agency said.

The prince, a brother of the Saudi monarch, will be announcing the bank account numbers to which the donations may be directed, the agency said.

Jerusalem's Israel mayor, Ehud Olmert, reacting to the Saudi call, said Monday that Israel would have the final say over any renovation projects in the Holy City.

Mr. Olmert, a member of the right-wing Likud Party, dismissed the Saudi fundraising drive as "propaganda," saying he did not believe major repair work was necessary.

"When the Saudi royal family wants to, it has other sources of financing without turning to a fund-raising drive of the type of knocking on everyone's door," Olmert said on Israel Radio.

"These types of announcements are largely made for their propaganda value," Mr. Olmert said. The Saudis were welcome to send money, but that Israeli authorities would have the final say over how it was spent.

"Under the law, we have the authority to decide where things are being built, what is being built and what will be renovated within the city limits of Jerusalem," Mr. Olmert asserted.

The foreign ministry agreed with Mr. Olmert that he had the final say over any renovation plans. Sheikh Khatib, director of

the Islamic Trust of Jerusalem, told the Associated Press the Israelis played no role in running the sites.

"We did not ask permission from the government of Israel or the municipality of Jerusalem for any renovations and don't plan to do so in the future," said Sheikh Khatib.

Sheikh Khatib also said the Saudis were welcome to contribute but that all funds would have to be channelled through Jordan.

Saudi Arabia has been vying for the right to care for the Muslim holy places in East Jerusalem. King Fahd, who carries the title of custodian of the holy shrines at Mecca and Medina, had offered in 1992 to donate millions of dollars to renovate Islamic sites in Jerusalem.

King Hussein stepped in and sold a house to finance the multimillion-dollar restoration of the golden dome of the Dome of the Rock that has become one of the city's symbols. Irish engineers are currently restoring the gilt dome.

Police storming ends Pakistan hijack drama

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Commandos stormed the Afghan embassy Monday night freeing five schoolboys and killing three Afghan gunmen who had held them hostage for nearly 40 hours.

A loud explosion was heard followed by gunfire inside the building, witnesses said. "It was a successful operation," said Interior Secretary Jamshed Burki.

Red-beret commandos in bullet proof vests had earlier taken up positions on the rooftop of the two-storey Afghan embassy. Soldiers were deployed around the compound.

The gunmen were demanding food for their war-ravaged homeland and \$5 million. The drama began on Sunday when the gunmen hijacked a busload of schoolchildren from the northeastern city of Peshawar, 200 kilometres away and drove them to Islamabad.

Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar was called on board and won the release of 55 youngest boys, some no older than five. Eight boys were released earlier on Monday.

The bus then drove to the nearby Afghan embassy. Shortly after it arrived, six women teachers were set free. The gunmen and the remaining

hostages then went inside the embassy.

Numerous Pakistani government officials, policemen and military officers walked in and out of the embassy Monday and held periodic talks with the kidnappers, but there were no breakthroughs. Pakistan had promised food but refused to give any money.

The gunmen said they did not belong to any of the feuding Afghan factions, but wanted to draw attention to the suffering of Kabul residents.

In addition to food and money, the kidnappers demanded that Pakistan reopen its border to Afghan refugees.

Pakistan, home to 1.5 million Afghan refugees, last month closed the border to new refugees after heavy fighting erupted in Kabul on Jan. 1.

No major food deliveries are expected in Kabul any time soon because the main road into Kabul has been blocked by the forces of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who is trying to oust President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Mr. Hekmatyar has condemned the kidnapping but has refused to lift the blockade, according to Pakistan's state-run news agency.

Sudanese rebels say government pushed back

NAIROBI (Agencies) — Southern Sudanese rebels said Monday that they had lodged government troops from their positions on a key battlefield weeks after Khartoum launched an offensive.

"Government troops have been pushed back with a lot of casualties," Justin Yac of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) told Reuters in Nairobi.

Aid organisations working in southern Sudan said that the sound of fighting could be heard in the area of Kit, south of the government-held southern capital of Juba, over the weekend.

There were also unconfirmed reports of bombing raids by government aircraft against rebel positions around Kit and the SPLA-held village of Arapi in the Eastern Equatorial province on Friday and Saturday.

Mr. Yac said that aircraft had bombed rebels counter-attacking against Khartoum soldiers around the village of Amadi in Western Equatoria and against Mundri village, which the SPLA retook after government forces briefly overran it last week.

Both warring sides in Sudan's civil war often lie about their military operations. Khartoum flatly denies it launched any kind of attack this month. Details are sketchy because aid workers have evacuated from much of the south.

Aid workers said government forces appeared to have been halted in their tracks after launching what Washington termed the biggest offensive by Khartoum for years in the south.

Tens of thousands of civilians have fled from flashpoints. U.S. ambassador to Khartoum Donald Petterson toured rebel areas last week and on Saturday he blamed the upsurge of the civilians mainly on government attacks.

Aid workers said fighting between SPLA factions along tribal lines was a major reason for the growing chaos in the south, and that refugees had fled camps in Eastern Equatoria mainly because of attacks on them by renegade SPLA fighters.

Hopes for a new African peace initiative were dashed last week when Sudan's military president, Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, scrapped talks with Kenyan leader Daniel Arap Moi in Nairobi.

Court acquits Bhutto in second power abuse charge

LAHORE (R) — A Pakistani special court acquitted Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Monday of the second of seven charges of abuse of power that were used to sack her three-and-a-half years ago.

"The case is dismissed," said Special Court Judge Munir Sheikh in his brief verdict on the charge that Ms. Bhutto abused her position as prime minister from 1988 to 1990 to allot prime land in the capital, Islamabad, illegally.

The same judge found the prime minister innocent last Saturday of allocating gas distribution licences to friends during her previous term.

That verdict was the first in hearings on corruption charges that have dragged through courts since the accusations were brought shortly after Ms. Bhutto was sacked in August

1990. "I knew that the last regime did not have any case which is why they delayed the proceedings to subject me and my party to persecution," a spokesman quoted Ms. Bhutto as saying. "I always knew that I was innocent and... I stand vindicated."

Insufficient evidence had been presented to back the charge, one of seven brought against Ms. Bhutto after then President Ghulam Ishaq Khan sacked her 20-month-old government in 1990 on disputed charges of power abuse, court sources quoted the judge as saying.

"Justice, though delayed, had finally not been denied," Ms. Bhutto's lawyer and former Interior Minister Aitzaz Ahsan said in an interview. The 287 acres of land near

the centre of Islamabad had in fact never been allotted, a lawyer for the prosecution, Deputy Attorney General Sheikh Maqbool Ahmad, said in answer to a question by the judge, the sources said.

Another of the cases is due to come before the special court on Saturday, and Mr. Ahsan said he was confident of a third acquittal.

Special courts set up to try Mr. Bhutto and several of her cabinet colleagues were empowered to disqualify them from parliament for up to seven years.

Ms. Bhutto, who became prime minister for the second time last October after winning fresh general elections, has always denied the charges.

Mr. Ahsan said the cases had been prosecuted during the previous government of ex-Prime Minister Nawaz

Sharif at enormous public expense.

Officials say the hearings have so far cost the government nearly 25 million rupees (\$83,000).

Earlier this month, the Pakistani Supreme Court cleared a former Bhutto law minister, Iftikhar Hussain Gilani, of disqualification from parliament said it would not oppose his appeal.

He was convicted by a special court in 1991 of misusing official funds in the first accountability judgement against Ms. Bhutto's first government.

A government counsel told the supreme court all accountability charges filed against Ms. Bhutto's former government were politically motivated.

Israel got \$6.37b in American aid in 1993, expected to receive same this year

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — American taxpayers bore the weight of \$6.321 billion in direct and indirect assistance to Israel in 1993 and will shoulder a similar amount during 1994, according to data compiled by the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs.

That would represent a per capita American subsidy of about \$1,300 for every Israeli, and \$1,650 for every Israeli Jew (considering that the nearly five million population of Israel include 800,000 Arabs).

The figures mentioned in the report reflected a much higher total than officially announced by Congress and than any mentioned in the mainstream American press, which usually gives the annual U.S. aid figures to Israel as "in excess of \$3 billion."

Normally, the actual figures, as calculated by the General Accounting Office (GAO), are not released for public information unless a specific request is made. Since the mid-1980s, American activists as well as Arab-American lobbying groups

such as the Anti-Discrimination Committee have made it a point to seek specific figures from the GAO, the investigating arm of Congress.

"Given the unwillingness of anyone in the Clinton administration to admit how much went to Israel in 1993, it is understandable that the Israelis keep seeking assurances that this same astronomical sum will be made available to them again in 1994," Ella Bancroft wrote in the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs.

The report said that the U.S. government gave \$1.8 billion in military aid and \$1.2 billion in economic assistance during 1994 in what could be categorised as direct aid.

But, it said, the administration and Congress allocated additional funds worth \$1.271 billion from the 1993 budget or "off-budget."

The report added \$2 billion in loans secured by Israel as part of \$10 billion in credits guaranteed by the United States to the overall assistance. It noted that a \$437 million was reduced from the loan guarantees in line with a congressional stipulation that the U.S. would deduct from

the guarantees "on dollar... for every dollar the Israeli government spends" on building settlements in the occupied territories.

However, the \$437 million reduction was more than made up for when Washington extended \$500 million in "military aid for (Israeli) re-deployment" from Gaza and Jericho in line with the Sept. 13 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord.

The allocation was made in November, at a time when an agreement had been reached between Israel and the PLO on an Israeli withdrawal or how complete the redeployment would be or when it would take place, the report noted.

In addition, Washington extended aid to Israel through the following channels:

— \$700 million were allocated as "draw-down of U.S. weapons in Europe for transfer to Israel;"

— \$300 million for creating a "U.S. weapons stockpile" in the Jewish state;

— \$180 million in fuel oil and fuel tanks to create a petroleum reserve in Israel.

— \$50 million in interest paid by the U.S. government on money borrowed for 1993

aid to Israel; and — \$80 million absorb refugees from Ethiopia and the former Soviet Union ("which, incidentally, was the original rationale for the annual \$2 billion in loan guarantees to Israel," the report noted).

These allocations as well as unspecified amounts allocated as funding for the Arrow anti-ballistic missile, a short-range unmanned aerial vehicle and a night targeting system for Cobra helicopters were among the "many... items that were approved by Congress in a last-minute scramble by individual members to get credit with Israel's powerful U.S. lobby in an election year," said the report.

U.S. congressional committees have already earmarked \$1.2 billion in economic assistance and \$1.8 billion in military assistance for Israel for 1994 despite an overall reduction of American foreign aid.

But "add-ons" and "additional" items that turn up in the budgets of various government departments could raise the 1994 U.S. aid to Israel to more than the 1993 level, the report said.

British queen visits Amerindians in Guyana

GEORGETOWN (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II and her husband Prince Philip visited an Amerindian settlement south of Guyana's capital Georgetown. The royal couple met with the leader and a village council of the settlement, then attended a Roman Catholic mass, with the Duke of Edinburgh reading the lesson. They will be guests of honour at a reception hosted by British High Commissioner David Johnson in the capital of the former British colony. The queen was to address Guyana's parliament Monday. She arrived Saturday and is to leave Tuesday to continue her Caribbean swing. She has already stopped in Anguilla and Dominica and will go to Belize, the Cayman Islands, Jamaica, the Bahamas and Bermuda.

British royalty abounds in Swiss Alps

KLOSTERS, Switzerland (AP) — Britain's Prince Charles wound up a skiing weekend with his two sons, while the Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson, enjoyed the thrills and spills of the snow around her ex-boyfriend's Alpine chalet. Princes William and Henry were due to return to England for the start of school Monday, leaving Prince Charles to continue his holiday. Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, offered numerous "photo-opportunities" on the sun-flooded slopes and on ski lifts, to the delight of journalists who were pursuing him at the Klosters resort. British and Swiss newspapers have speculated that the normally aloof prince wanted to use the weekend to improve his image as he tries to regain the public's affection after his estranged wife Princess Diana.

Princess Diana, much more cautious on the snow than Prince Charles, will take her sons to the Austrian resort of Lech in March. "William and Harry will soon ski better than their father," ski coach Bruno Sprecher told the Swiss tabloid Blick. The newspaper reported that Prince Charles had forbidden his sons, ages 11 and 9, to try out the popular sport of surf boarding — a snow-bound skateboard — because it was too dangerous. For the two young princes, it was the first real skiing holiday with their father and the first time they had been to Klosters, in southwestern Switzerland. In southwestern Switzerland, the Duchess of York and her two daughters, Beatrice and Eugenie, ages 5 and 3, were enthusiastic about the superb skiing conditions during the weekend. "We are having a wonderful time and my children love skiing," Ms. Ferguson told other tourists in the resort of Verbier. The newspaper Blick said "Fergie" and her daughters were staying in the chalet belonging to Paddy McNally. She used to live with McNally before she married and subsequently separated from — Prince Andrew, Prince Charles' brother.

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